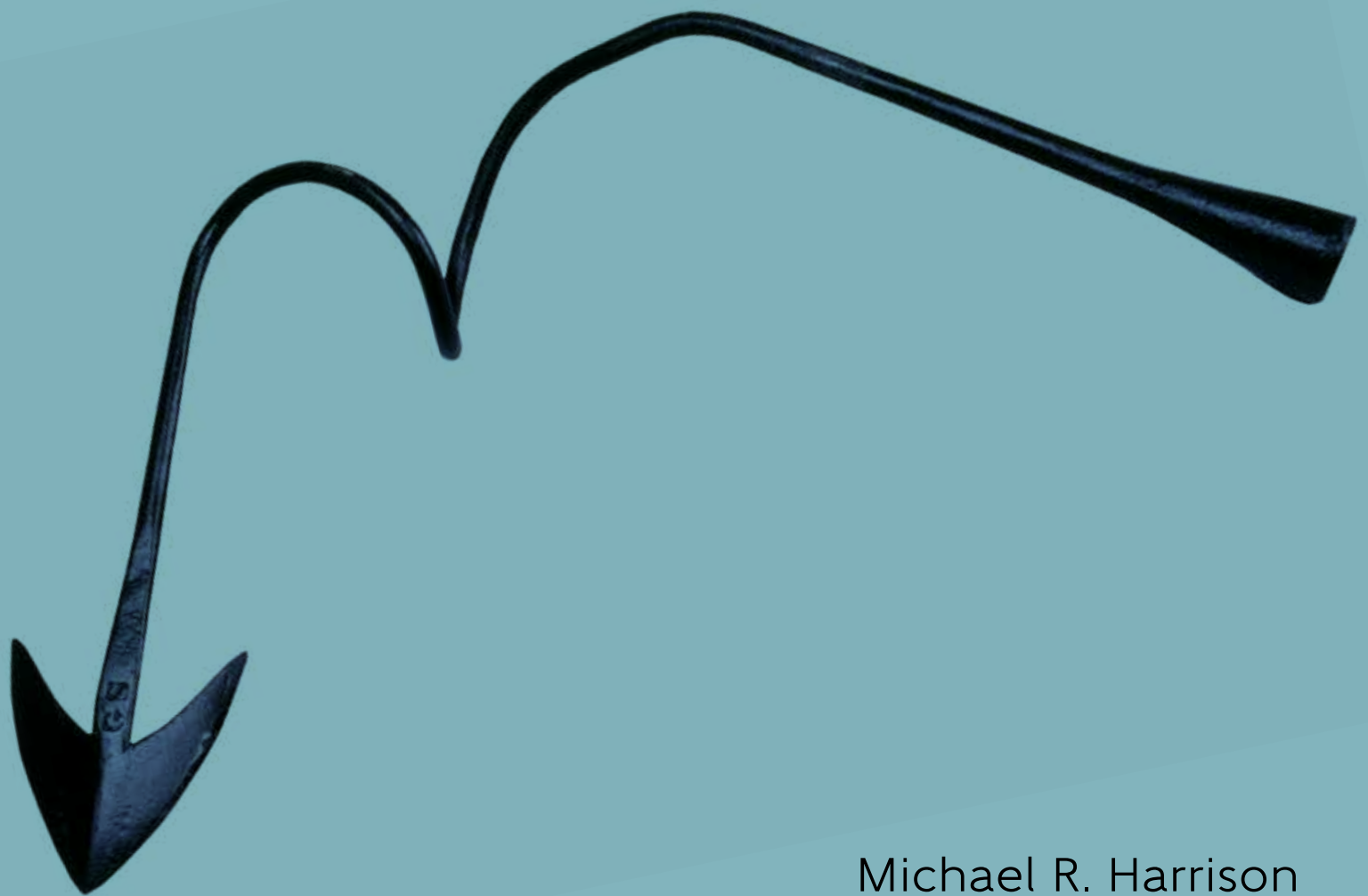


# Collecting Nantucket

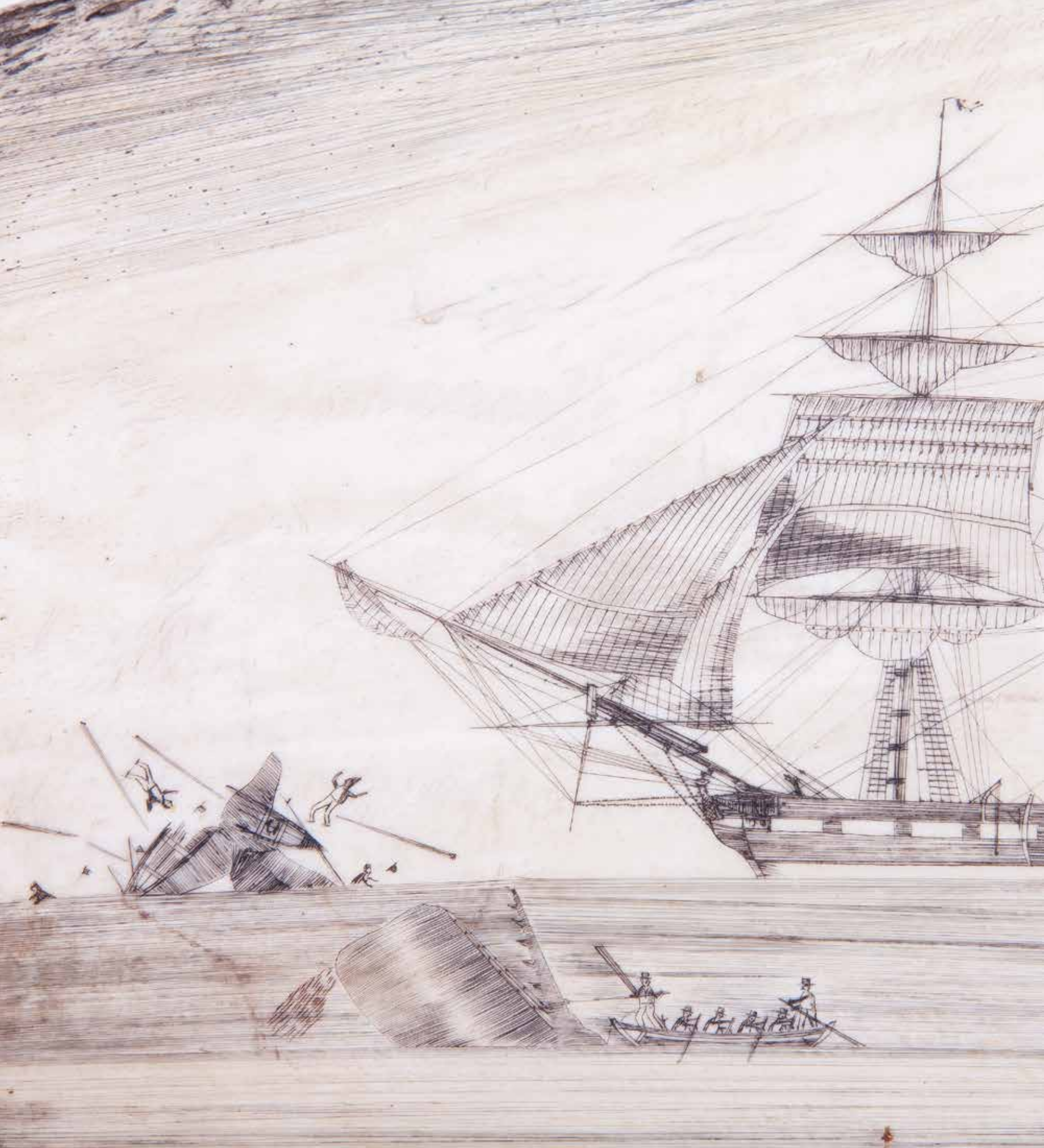
ARTIFACTS FROM AN ISLAND COMMUNITY



Michael R. Harrison

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Michael R. Harrison



NANTUCKET  
HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION



Michael R. Harrison is the Robyn & John Davis Chief Curator of the Nantucket Historical Association. A graduate of the University of Pennsylvania and the George Washington University, he has worked as a curator and historian at the National Building Museum, the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of American History, Glasgow Museums (Scotland), and the Heritage Documentation Programs of the National Park Service.

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*Front cover*

Harpoon by George Swain Jr. (1791–1880)  
Gift of the New Bedford Whaling Museum, 1930 (1992.160.1)

*Endpapers*

Wampanoag projectile points  
Gift of Alice and Alfred Shurrocks, 1940 (1940.1)

*Frontispiece*

Engraved panbone (detail), ca. 1830  
Acquired in trade from David Gray, 1955 (1956.3.1)

For Robert C. Harrison



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*James Russell and Patricia S. Anathan*

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*Number of copies of this book, incorporated  
in the year one thousand eight hundred and  
fifty six.*

*James Russell*





# Foreword

Congratulations to Michael Harrison, our Robyn & John Davis Chief Curator, on writing this insightful work focused on the collections of the Nantucket Historical Association. The association's mission is to articulate the inspiring stories of Nantucket and convey the island's historic significance through scholarship and programs. Artifacts, documents, and historic properties are at the heart of what we do. Just as the vitality of the organization comes from its diverse membership, the collection as a whole is greater than the sum of its parts. The interwoven complexity and richness of the stories the objects tell together creates meaning and resonance for our visitors.

When launching this project last year, it was our intention to avoid making a mere souvenir book or repeating previous publications that have examined specific aspects of our holdings. Harrison's responsibility is to oversee and shape the collection in ways which reflect the full scope of our mission. He has, more than any other person, the authority, insight, and deep understanding to highlight the collection's strengths and scope and discover its hidden treasures. The objects highlighted here reflect his connoisseurship and scholarly interests, presenting one curator's take on the essence of a collection that has been 124 years in the making.

The Nantucket Historical Association is committed to producing excellent works of scholarship, and this publication is no exception. With its beautiful object photography by Jeff Allen, it is a worthy addition to the library of anyone with a keen interest in Nantucket's history. On behalf of the Board of Trustees, we express our deep appreciation to Dennis and Susan Shapiro for inspiring the project and stepping forward as its lead sponsors. Their vision has energized strong support by many others, for which we are truly grateful. As Woodrow Wilson said, "America is not anything if it consists of each of us. It is something only if it consists of all of us." In this spirit of community, we are happy to present *Collecting Nantucket*.

James Russell

*Gosnell Executive Director*  
Nantucket Historical Association

Patricia S. Anathan

*Collections and Exhibitions Committee Chair*  
Nantucket Historical Association

# Preface

Nantucket was once a world center of whaling; now it is an exclusive summer resort. As these disparate identities suggest, the island, like all places, has changed greatly over time despite its reputation as a time capsule of maritime New England. Whether we look at its economy, its demographics, its coastline, its housing stock, or its plant and animal life, the island is no longer the same as it was in the past.

The Nantucket Historical Association makes sense of these changes through its research, exhibitions, and programs. Since its founding in 1894, the association has collected more than 25,000 artifacts, 60,000 photographs, 8,000 books, and tens of thousands of documents and manuscripts. The association preserves these items so residents and visitors can draw inspiration and meaning from the past, whether to commemorate the island's successes, learn from its failings, or, perhaps most importantly, celebrate the lives and accomplishments of its people.

This book presents more than one hundred highlights from the association's collection, selected for the stories they tell and the truths they reveal about the past. Featured items represent the breadth of the collection and the diversity of the island's people. A balance has been sought between famous treasures and artifacts of the everyday, and duplication with previous publications, particularly those exploring the art and architecture collections, has been kept to a minimum. The objects are presented in the order in which they were collected, an arrangement that invites intriguing juxtapositions and suggests how the association's collecting priorities have developed over time to reflect new scholarship and ideas about the island's past. I hope readers will find many things of interest and come away with a deeper appreciation of Nantucket and its history.

I want to thank my colleagues at the Nantucket Historical Association for their support and encouragement during this project. Executive director James Russell and chief

operating officer Johanna Richard enthusiastically promoted the book at every opportunity. Collections manager Tony Dumitru organized the complicated process of photography. Costume and textile specialist Jennifer Nieling contributed to the research and writing and mounted the costumes for photography. Library manager Amelia Holmes, photo archives specialist Marie Henke, Obed Macy research chair M. Chris Manning, and research associate Libby Oldham answered questions and uncovered sources with their customary good humor. The maintenance staff under Edwin Rudd—Manny Sylvia, Kathrina Marques, Mark Delay, and Joe Bedell—moved large objects and prepared the catboat *Monomoy* for photography. Bridgette Hynes, Julianne Kever, Karyn Lindsay, Cristen Merck, Rebecca Miller, Tracy Murray, Jeremy Slavitz, and Stacey Stuart all generously helped in ways big and small.

Betsy Tyler, the historical association's former Obed Macy research chair and my guide in all things Nantucket, worked with me at an early stage to draft the first cut of objects and provided invaluable insights on the final manuscript. Historian Frances Karttunen checked facts and shared sources. Colleagues Kevin Bunker and Paula Fleming provided crucial insights and connections. Conservator Rachael Modrovsky stabilized and conserved key artifacts after years in storage.

I owe particular thanks to graphic designer Helen Riegle, photographer Jeffrey S. Allen, and editor Jane Donnelly for ensuring the book's visual quality.

Finally, I want to thank my partner, Matthew J. Kuhnert, for providing keen insight and sober judgement throughout the project. I am deeply grateful for his steadfast humor, intelligence, and companionship throughout our many years together.

MRH

March 2018

# Collecting Nantucket

ARTIFACTS FROM AN ISLAND COMMUNITY



# Introduction

The Nantucket Historical Association was organized on May 9, 1894. Mary E. Starbuck, the first recording secretary, described its purpose as the collection of “books, manuscripts, and mementoes . . . to illustrate the history of the island as it was known to us, and to our forefathers, and even to the original dwellers, whom we with Destiny, have quite dispossessed.” Starbuck and her fellow organizers keenly felt that their island had once been a special place because of its whaling heritage; they had seen it change in their lifetimes from a bustling seaport to a quiet summering place. “Let us preserve the memorials of a time when a powerful centre of energy was just here, on this little island, far out at sea,” she wrote.<sup>1</sup>

The association found enthusiastic support in the community. “It is delightful to know that at last there is really a Nantucket Historical Association,” a letter in the newspaper declared. “Visions of sugar bowls and teapots; platters and pitchers; old books and manuscripts; old furniture and silver, dance in my head. For even after all charming reminders of the olden time that have been carried away by the summer bric-a-brac hunter, there must still be articles tucked back in dark corners that will now be brought to light. And other treasures that have given pleasure to a few people, will now be placed where they can be enjoyed by many more.”<sup>2</sup>

In this spirit, Mary Starbuck encouraged her neighbors at the association’s first annual meeting to “make an active search



The historical association’s collections displayed in the Friends Meeting House on Fair Street, ca. 1904 (GPN2844).



for all sorts of relics, particularly manuscripts, before it is too late and these valuable mementoes are carried away from the island as trophies, or by progressive housewives 'cast as rubbish to the void.'" Fellow islanders heard her, and by summer 1896 the organization held 800 objects, 180 of them on loan.<sup>3</sup>

Since its founding days, the association has had a sustained interest in items representing the island's people, everyday life in the past, and Nantucket whaling. A 1906 report by Susan E. Brock, the first curator, presents a typical summary: "We have acquired some fine specimens of 'scrim-shont' work, one painting of a Nantucket ship, and a child's chair handed down in one family since 1771, and we have rescued several painted portraits of old Nantucket sea captains from the ignominious fate of being 'sold at auction on the Square.'"<sup>4</sup>



Marie Roan Cloud, advertising executive and planner of the 1959 Nantucket tercentenary celebrations, tours the Whaling Museum during a 1958 island visit. She poses in the museum's replica gamming chair next to dozens of harpoons donated by Edward Sanderson (P4446).

Large acquisitions have played a significant role in developing the collection. The purchase of Josiah Freeman's glass-plate negatives in 1900 established the core of what is now the island's largest photographic archive. The acceptance on permanent loan in 1905 of the Nantucket Atheneum's artifact collection—"with its many marine curiosities, its rare South Sea Island articles, the great whale's jaw, the models of ships and the 'Camels,'" greatly increased the association's holdings in ethnography and natural history.<sup>5</sup> Alice and Alfred Shurrocks gave a thousand Native American artifacts in 1940, establishing an archeology collection that has grown manyfold since. Twelve-dozen trade signs given by Florence E. Clifford and her children in 2005 enhanced the association's ability to interpret island business history, while the donation of a half-dozen private collections of scrimshaw endowed one of the finest cabinets of such folk art in the world. The single most important large donation came in 1927, when seasonal resident Edward F. Sanderson turned over a collection of whaling implements—"harpoons, lances, spades, figure-heads, ship-models, scrimshaw, rare old whaling prints and books"—that he had been gathering since 1925 specifically to equip a whaling museum on Nantucket. He also facilitated the association's acquisition of the Hadwen & Barney Candle House on Broad Street, which opened as the Whaling Museum in 1930.<sup>6</sup>

The candle house was the association's fifth historic-property purchase. Shortly after its founding, the organization acquired the Friends Meeting House on Fair Street for its headquarters. Three years later, the association purchased the island's last windmill at auction, and other buildings followed by both purchase and donation over the ensuing years, including the Gardner House in 'Sconset in 1910 (sold in 1939), the Oldest House on Sunset Hill in 1923, the Old Gaol and the House of Correction in 1946 (the latter razed in 1954), 4 Mill Street in 1951, and the Thomas Macy Warehouse in 1984. Four houses acquired between 1964 and 1986—Hadwen House, Macy-Christian House, Greater Light, and the Thomas Macy House—all came with their last owners' furnishings, vastly

expanding the association’s holdings in decorative arts, ceramics, and textiles.

While the association has always relied on donations, from the first it was willing to purchase items when necessary. Among the earliest purchases were a pair of glass candlesticks—“formerly the property of Eunice Paddack, the last resident member of the Fair St. Meeting”—in March 1895.<sup>7</sup> In the 1910s, the curator could purchase a 1798 sampler for \$5 and an important portrait for \$50. By the 1980s, the high demand for Nantucket art and antiques increasingly placed valuable works beyond the association’s reach. To keep the organization competitive in the market, a group of collectors formed the Friends of the Nantucket Historical Association

in 1986 to purchase important high-value works for the collection. The Friends’ generosity over the last thirty years has added more than one hundred works to the collection, including paintings by Gilbert Stuart and George Inness, irreplaceable logbooks, and choice examples of silver, furniture, and scrimshaw.

Today, the association continues to refine its traditional holdings while seeking to collect objects representing contemporary matters such as immigration, conservation, historic preservation, and real-estate development. As the island community changes, the Nantucket Historical Association will continue to preserve the artifacts of the island’s heritage for all Nantucketers.



The *Timeline of Nantucket History* exhibit at the Whaling Museum, opened in 2016.

## Baby basket, ca. 1791

Rachel Swain (1771–1863). Ash, 8 x 23 x 21 in.

Gift of Elizabeth Starbuck, 1894 (1895.1.1)

This basket is the first object collected by the Nantucket Historical Association. Elizabeth Starbuck (1812–99), in whose house the association was organized in May 1894, lent it to the nascent society within two weeks of its founding, and her heirs donated it permanently in 1928. The basket was woven by Rachel Swain (1771–1863), Elizabeth’s mother, for use as a bassinet to hold her infant children. According to early museum records, Rachel “was the mother of eleven children, and at the advent of each child, this basket was used, and then laid away until occasion again called it into service.” The

basket’s association with birth and new beginnings made it an ideal inaugural artifact for the collection, a poetic gesture likely not lost on Elizabeth Starbuck.<sup>8</sup>

Rachel Swain was born Rachel Fish and married Jonathan Swain (1769–1843) in March 1791. Their first child arrived the following January, and the basket probably dates from around this time. The names of only nine children are known—five daughters and four sons—with Elizabeth being the youngest.



Rachel Swain and two of her grandchildren, ca. 1860.

Gift of Elizabeth Starbuck, 1900 (P857).









## Ship *Lady Adams of Nantucket*, 1807

Nicolas Cammillieri (ca. 1773–1860). Watercolor and ink on paper, 18 x 25 in.

Gift of Harriet R. Easton, 1894 (1895.3.1)

This watercolor is among the earliest painted depictions of a Nantucket vessel. Created by French marine artist Nicolas Cammillieri, it portrays the ship *Lady Adams* passing Fort Saint-Jean at the entrance to the harbor of Marseilles in 1807. The crew have the anchor ready, while the ship's private signal, long pennant, and the national ensign fly overhead. The technical details of rig and sails are all correct, ready to please the discerning eye of Captain Jonathan Colesworthy (1772–1849), who likely commissioned the piece for himself or for the ship's owners back on Nantucket.<sup>9</sup>

The 231-ton *Lady Adams* was built at Falmouth, Massachusetts, in 1801. The ship made a multifaceted trading voyage to China under Captain Obed Fitch (1767–1847) from 1802 to 1805. The ship rounded Cape Horn and hunted seals off the Chilean coast from January 1803 to April 1804. Having loaded 47,000 pelts, Fitch sailed the ship to Macao and then to Canton, where he traded the furs for 1,830 chests of tea, 10,000 pieces of nankeen cloth, and a few boxes of china.

The ship returned to Nantucket in April 1805, remaining home just four months before heading to Calcutta under Captain Colesworthy. In 1807, Colesworthy took the ship on a third trading voyage, this time to the Mediterranean, where this painting was commissioned.<sup>10</sup>

The *Lady Adams* was outfitted as a whaler in 1808 and made six whaling voyages over the next fifteen years. Fire destroyed the ship with all hands off the coast of Japan in 1823.<sup>11</sup>



Captain Jonathan Colesworthy, ca. 1805, by Charles Delin (1756–1818). Oil on canvas, 27 x 21½ in. Gift of Robert Clark, 1953 (1992.570.1).

## Shingle from 7 Milk Street, ca. 1832

Unknown Suffolk County, Va., maker. Cypress,  $28\frac{3}{4} \times 7 \times \frac{3}{8}$  in.  
Gift of Foster Kent, 1895 (1896.119.1)

Coastal trade long connected Nantucket to communities from Atlantic Canada to the Caribbean. In 1832, merchant Thomas Coffin (1789–1868) imported several cargoes from Norfolk, Virginia, to Nantucket in his schooner *Eliza*. Coffin reserved some of the cypress shingles that arrived in these shipments to clad the exterior of his Milk Street home, of which this example survives. According to its donor, the shingle was produced by free black or enslaved laborers in the South. In a New England community known for its opposition to slavery, it is an irony of seaborne trade that the most characteristic feature of Nantucket's built environment—the shingled facade—was partially made possible by the labor of enslaved people.<sup>12</sup>

Thomas Coffin's shingle likely originated in the Great Dismal Swamp, a formidable wilderness straddling the Virginia–North Carolina border that was the largest supplier of cypress shingles for New England in the nineteenth century. (Equally popular cedar shingles came from a variety of sources, north and south.) Timbering operations in the “Great Dismal” were enormously profitable but dangerous and labor-intensive. In the 1830s, more than five hundred workers, most of them enslaved, toiled in the swamp under the harshest conditions imaginable. Shingle getters, if freemen, received piecework wages of between \$3 and \$4 per thousand shingles; some enslaved men were able to earn enough to purchase their freedom.<sup>13</sup>

The hidden interior reaches of the Great Dismal Swamp were also a noted refuge for runaway slaves, disenfranchised Native Americans, and other exiles seeking a life apart. As such, the swamp inspired several early works of abolitionist literature, including Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's “The Slave in the Dismal Swamp” (1842) and Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Dred: A Tale of the Great Dismal Swamp* (1856), both of which were popular on Nantucket.<sup>14</sup>

MJK



*Carting Shingles on Horse Canyon Road [in the Great Dismal Swamp], March 20, 1856, by David H. Strother (1816–88). Pen and ink wash on paper. Courtesy of the West Virginia and Regional History Center, West Virginia University Libraries (P.95.30.176).*







## *Cataract No. 6* fire engine, 1831

Stephen Thayer, Boston, Mass. Wood, iron, copper alloys, leather, rubber, paint, 88½ x 186 x 61 in.

Purchase, 1896 (1937.39.1)

Around 11:00 p.m. on July 13, 1846, William H. Geary's hat shop on Main Street caught fire. *Cataract No. 6* was the first fire engine on the scene. Its men connected the engine to one of the town cisterns, but the cistern was too far from the fire for the engine's stream to be effective. When *Fountain No. 8* arrived, its men asked for their machine to be supplied from *Cataract's* hose so they could quickly set up closer to the fire. The *Cataract's* captain refused, either because he did not want to interrupt his engine's service or because he felt proprietary about being first on the scene. By the time the *Fountain* connected to another cistern, the fire had spread beyond control. By sunrise, some three hundred buildings across thirty-three acres in the commercial core of the town had been destroyed.<sup>15</sup>

Nantucket quickly rebuilt, and the fire department tightened its rules about chain of command. This engine remained in service, stationed eventually in a hose-cart house on Gardner

Street. In 1896, at the arrival of the first steam fire pumper on island, the town withdrew the *Cataract* from service and sold it to the historical association for \$10.

The town of Nantucket relied entirely on hand-pumped fire engines from 1750 until 1896. *Cataract* is typical of New England fire appliances from the first half of the nineteenth century. Drawn to the scene by its company of men and operated entirely by hand, it features a two-cylinder single-acting pump inside a copper-lined wood tub, which was filled with water by bucket brigade or suction hose. Its long wood pumping handles, stored to either side, were swung into position at the ends of the appliance for use. The crane neck at the front permitted the front wheels to be rotated through a wide arc, allowing the engine to turn on a dime for easy positioning.



Small pitcher encased in glass melted by the Great Fire of 1846.  
Gift of Mary E. Macy, 1896 (1896.136.1).



## The Hutchinson Family Singers, ca. 1845

Unknown photographer. Half-plate daguerreotype, 4¼ x 5½ in.  
Gift of Malinda S. Barney, 1896 (C91)

This expensive half-plate daguerreotype probably belonged to Eliza and Nathaniel Barney, leading anti-slavery voices on Nantucket before the Civil War; it was given to the association by their daughter. It depicts the Hutchinson Family Singers, the most popular American vocal group of the 1840s. "They were a unique and striking family," their friend Frederick Douglass wrote. "They sang for freedom, for temperance, for peace, for moral and social reform."<sup>16</sup>

Judson, Abby, John, and Asa (seen here, left to right) were four of the sixteen children of a New Hampshire farming family. A fifth sibling, Jesse, managed them. The quartet toured extensively through the American northeast, popularizing four-part close harmony with songs honoring home, family, love, and freedom and promoting the causes of temperance, emancipation, and women's suffrage. Their fame took them to England, Ireland, and Scotland with Douglass in 1845–46 and eventually into the Midwest and West as well.<sup>17</sup>

The Hutchinsons came to Nantucket in June and September 1843. "All lovers of harmony should endeavor to hear these delightful vocalists," the *Nantucket Inquirer* declared after their first island performance. "Their style of singing is unaffected, and particularly well calculated to suit the taste

of this community. The price of admission is in accordance with the times."<sup>18</sup> A second performance a few days later was cancelled when the siblings contracted the flu. Nevertheless, during this visit Asa (1823–84) met Elizabeth Chase (1828–74), daughter of whaling captain Frederick B. Chase and his wife Phebe. The couple married in April 1847. They performed together with their children as the Tribe of Asa and eventually settled in Minnesota.



Asa and Elizabeth Hutchinson and two of their children, Oliver and Frederick, ca. 1860. Gift of Paul Blackmur from the family of Lauriston Bunker, 1975 (A4-26).







## Portrait of a man, ca. 1857

Unknown photographer. Whole-plate tintype,  $8\frac{3}{8} \times 6\frac{3}{8}$  in.  
Lent by Rachel Lynch, 1896 (Tintype 18)

This exceptional tintype, reproduced at actual size, is one of the most arresting portraits in the association's collection. Photographic portraits of nineteenth-century African American Nantucketers are rare. The collection contains perhaps a dozen, but none are as striking as the likeness of this distinguished man.

Unfortunately, the man's identity is uncertain. Museum records from 1896 identify the photo as Rev. James E. Crawford (1811–88), one of the island's "best known and most highly respected citizens," who was minister of Pleasant Street Baptist Church for forty years. But Reverend Crawford was a rotund man, known for his light complexion; in 1858, he purchased his sister-in-law and niece out of slavery in the South by passing as a white man. Photographs of him from the 1860s do not resemble this tintype.<sup>19</sup>

Later, the picture was re-identified as Arthur Cooper (1789–1853), another pillar of the community, likely based on comparison with a painting of Cooper given to the association by his daughter in 1899. Cooper fled slavery in Virginia and settled on Nantucket around 1820 with his free-born wife Mary (1785–1826) and their children. When slave hunters arrived in 1822 to claim him under the 1793 Fugitive Slave Act, black neighbors turned out in force to protect the Coopers, and white Quakers hid the family until the agents had gone. A writer to the newspaper years later remembered Cooper: "[H]is serene countenance is brought vividly to my mind, as he passed along on Sundays to church with his brown beaver and white cravat, resembling much a Quaker costume."<sup>20</sup> Unfortunately, the serene man in the tintype cannot be Arthur Cooper; he died in 1853, three years before the tintype process was invented and four years before it arrived on island.<sup>21</sup>



Rev. James E. Crawford, 1860s (GPN973).



*Arthur Cooper*, ca. 1830, by an unknown artist.  
Oil on canvas, 20 x 16¼ in. Gift of Eliza Ann King, 1899  
(1899.131.1).

## Lunette from the steamer *Island Home*, 1855

Lawrence & Sneed, Brooklyn, N.Y. Painted wood, 33 x 64½ x 6 in.

Purchase, 1896 (1897.153.2)

The sidewheel steamer *Island Home* connected Nantucket to mainland Massachusetts for forty-one years, beginning in 1855. For thirty-one of those years, the vessel was commanded by island-born Captain Nathan H. Manter (1818–97), one of many local men and women who made a living working on the boat or supporting its operations at the dock.

A pair of carved lunettes decorated the *Island Home*'s paddlewheel boxes. When the much-loved steamer was withdrawn from service and sold in 1895, the Nantucket Historical Association purchased both the port and starboard lunettes. Other mementos of the long-lived steamer in the collection include its steam whistle and the transom from one of its small utility boats.

The Nantucket and Cape Cod Steamship Company, controlled by Nantucket investors, ordered the *Island Home* to exploit the opening of a railroad terminus at Hyannis, which they hoped would attract more visitors to the island from Boston and New York and bring "thousands upon thousands into the pockets of our citizens." The steamer was built at Lawrence & Sneed's yard in Greenpoint, Brooklyn, and was powered by machinery from the Morgan Iron Works in Manhattan.<sup>22</sup>

*Island Home* was designed to carry freight and passengers. Its route diversified over time as new mainland railroad lines opened and new summer-home and resort facilities were developed on Martha's Vineyard and Cape Cod. Sold as obsolete in 1895, the vessel was converted to a barge the following year. It sank from ice damage in 1902.<sup>23</sup>



*Island Home* in the ice of a frozen Nantucket harbor, 1893 (F3059).





Georgetown Dec 29 1826

Dear friend Jim Grace ~~thru~~ this opportunity to let  
you no that I am well and I am in hopes  
those few lines may find you and all ~~your~~  
in quiring friends the same I a dived here about  
three weeks ago I found all my family quite well and my  
friends in general I was blessed with grade young by white and  
Cullard I want to see you all very much in deed I gave you  
a state ment of my fare side once I in Boston got \$50  
in Bedford \$54 in New York \$13 in Phil adelphia \$2  
I am a trade that my family will be taking from  
me at last for this man that my wife and children  
will fall in the hands of at death of Mrs Bell his mother  
ever law has sold a parte of a family to George so I am  
informed and how long it may ~~appear~~ our Case the Lord ~~was~~  
more than ask \$900 for them I have 300 and if you with  
your partner in Law and some other gentel man on the  
I Land will make up the money you may have the  
children for to pay for it ~~till~~ and the money I give till  
the are twenty one the oldest is 13 years and the best down  
to the youngest and she is going on five years the  
young ones I will take care of till they are fit for  
servist and then if they may take them untill the are  
twenty so that he ever will under take for me I am  
in hopes they will not lose any thing by it in long  
Run my best Respect to Mrs May and the children  
tell her for to please with her partner for me I send a letter  
to him in the ~~next~~



## Letter to Thomas Macy, 1826

Joseph Mason (b. 1780s?). Ink on paper, 9¾ x 7¾ in.

Lent by Mary E. Macy, ca. 1896 (Ms. 96, folder 40)

This extraordinary letter is part of a fragmentary collection of documents by and about tradesman Joseph Mason (b. 1780s?). Born into an enslaved family in Maryland, Mason escaped from the Peters of Georgetown, D.C., around 1823, leaving his wife and children behind. Heading north, he landed at Nantucket, where he assumed the name John Williams out of fear of being recaptured. His situation became known to various people on island, and, in 1824 and 1825, merchant Thomas Macy, who had business connections in Baltimore and Washington, worked through agents to purchase Mason's freedom. Negotiations stalled when John Peter stipulated that Mason should never return to the capital region because of the embarrassment Mason's successful bid for freedom would cause the Peters. Some conclusion was reached, however, for Mason announced his freedom in a notice in the *Nantucket Inquirer* in March 1826.<sup>24</sup> Later that year, as revealed in the letter reproduced here, he traveled south to secure his family's

freedom. Carrying \$300 but discovering he needed \$600 more, he asked Thomas Macy to raise the rest, promising the labor of his children "to pay for it and tha may sirve till tha aire twenty . . . so that hu ever will under take for me I am in hopes tha will not luse enny thing by it in long run." The money appears to have been raised and forwarded, because, in an 1838 letter written in Georgetown, Mason tells Macy,

*I am well and my famelly all so and I am in hopes thaes few lines may finde you and your famelly the same . . . I am doing Right good Bisness at this time my ocupation is smokeing fish wich I have sent you a Boox of them and Ruster and hen to Mrs Masy I shal never for get you and all my frends on Nantucket My wife and Childrn Joines in love with me to you and your famelly My Best and Cindes love to all in quireing frends white or Collad that may inquire after me*

## The Old Mill, 1746

Unknown American builder. Wood, iron, stone  
Purchase, 1897

The Nantucket Historical Association purchased its first historic building in 1894, within a month of the organization's founding. That building was the Friends Meeting House on Fair Street, the last building on island still configured for Quaker worship, although it had been built in 1838 as a school. The association used the meeting house as its first museum. Caroline L. W. French of Boston, one of the benefactors of the meeting-house purchase, conditioned her donation on the association raising a reserve to purchase the island's last surviving windmill should it come on the market. When it came up for auction in August 1897, the association was able to buy it for \$885.<sup>25</sup>

The Old Mill is a grist mill, one of five that once stood on hills outside of town to grind the produce of local agriculture. It is traditionally said to have been built in 1746—that date is carved into a stone doorstep—but there is virtually no documentation to support any of the stories that surround the mill's early history. Beginning in 1854, the mill was

owned by a series of former mariners from the Azores, part of a growing Azorean immigrant community on Nantucket and throughout southern New England at the time. John Francis Sylvia (d. 1896) owned the mill from 1866 until his death, running it periodically but increasingly opening it as a tourist curiosity. It remains today one of the island's most recognizable landmarks.<sup>26</sup>



Leonard Thompson of Woburn, Mass., collected this gear tooth from the Old Mill as a souvenir of an 1890 visit to Nantucket. Gift of Woburn Public Library, 2016 (2016.16.1).



*Old Farmer—Nantucket (John F. Sylvia)*, 1883, by Margaret Lesley Bush-Brown (1857–1944). Oil on canvas, 20 x 14 in. Gift of the Friends of the Nantucket Historical Association, 1992 (1992.24.1).



Photograph by Eileen Powers, 2007.





## Seashell menus, 1893

Attributed to Susan A. Mowry (1852–1923). Ink on clam shells, 1 x 3¼ x 3 in. (menu), 1 x 3¼ x 1⅞ in. (invitation, closed)  
Donor and donation date uncertain (x71)

Handwritten inside these clamshells are the invitation and menu for a special St. Patrick's Day supper offered at the Springfield House in 1893. For many years, the Springfield House was one of the island's leading hotels. It opened in 1872 in a small building on North Water Street; by 1883, it occupied four buildings spread along the street. Originally managed by Albert S. Mowry (1837–87), the proprietorship passed to his son, Charles H. Mowry (1860–1934), in 1887. Charles's wife, Susan (1852–1923), ran the restaurant, which filled the lower floor of one of the buildings.<sup>27</sup>

Nantucket was well supplied with boarding houses and inns during its prosperous whaling days, some catering to genteel travelers and others to sailors. The first hotels marketed to tourists opened in town and in Siasconset in the late 1840s. Concerted efforts to advertise the island as a "watering place" in the late 1860s blossomed in a rush of hotel building in the 1870s. The island counted eleven hotels and at least twenty-seven rooming houses by 1884. When the first electrical generating plant was installed on island in 1889, the Springfield House and adjacent hotels were the first buildings illuminated—a testament to the centrality of the hotels to the island's developing hospitality economy.<sup>28</sup>



Susan A. Mowry, ca. 1892 (GPN1644B).



Dining room of the Springfield House, 1880s (GPN1655).



## Main Street, 1845

George William Johnson Hawes (1817–92). Sixth-plate daguerreotype,  $3\frac{5}{16} \times 2\frac{7}{8}$  in.

Gift of Lydia Macy and Mary S. Macy, 1897 (C225)

This is the only known outdoor photograph of Nantucket from before the Great Fire of 1846. It shows the north side of Main Street, beginning with John Brock's residence at right, built in the late eighteenth century. The commercial block dominating the center of the image, built in 1804 and 1806, housed, at the time of the photo, the retail establishments of Edward T. Wilson, Edward and James Kelley, Wyman Bradbury, and others; the Nantucket Savings Bank; and the Coffin School Library. The porticoed Methodist Chapel (1823) appears in the center distance, and the Pacific Bank (1818) just peeks into frame on the left.

Daguerreotypist George William Johnson Hawes (1817–92) rented rooms above the post office on the south side of Main Street for two brief periods in April and July 1845, offering his

services to the public "for the purpose of taking likenesses." He and his brother Charles operated a daguerreotype studio in New Bedford at the time. Another brother, Josiah Johnson Hawes of the Boston firm Southworth & Hawes, was one of the finest daguerreotype artists of the day.<sup>29</sup>

Daguerreotypes generally invert their subjects, presenting the world in reverse, and they are prized for their sharpness and clarity of detail. Unusually, this daguerreotype is not reversed and suffers from soft focus in the center and left foreground. These features suggest it may be a copy of a now-lost original, taken to duplicate the original image after the Great Fire created a demand for multiples of this now-destroyed scene.







## Abram Quarry, 1851

Hermine Dassel (1821–57). Oil on canvas, 20½ x 18½ in.  
Gift of Dr. Clifford Mitchell, 1900 (1900.18.1)

Abram Quarry (1772–1854) became known during his lifetime as “Nantucket’s last Indian.” He went whaling in his youth and later supported himself through farming, basket making, and steaming quahogs to serve to visitors at his rural home. A widely reproduced portrait of him by Hermine Dassel, now in the Nantucket Atheneum collection, depicts him as a lonely hermit, sitting lost in thought by his window. In hindsight, he was not the last Native person on Nantucket. Dorcas Honorable, a Wampanoag woman, outlived him; both had descendants. There were many people of mixed heritage on island, and Native people from Martha’s Vineyard and Mashpee lived on Nantucket at later times. As historian Frances Karttunen has written, “The way Quarry had passed the last years of his life, however—living alone and carrying on traditional foodways and crafts that he made available to the public—appealed to the sensibilities of nineteenth-century people as appropriate to ‘the last of his race.’”<sup>30</sup>

Hermine Dassel (1821–57) painted Quarry during an 1851 visit to the island.<sup>31</sup> In addition to her Atheneum portrait of him, she painted the portrait shown here, plus a likeness of young Isabella Draper, a portrait of astronomer Maria Mitchell, and other images. A Frankfurt newspaper the next year praised Dassel’s interest in depicting Native Americans “as beautifully and poetically as ever native [i.e., American] artist has succeeded.”<sup>32</sup>

Born in Königsberg, Prussia, as Hermine Borchardt, she took up painting at age fifteen to contribute to her family’s income after her father suffered financial reversals. The 1848 revolution ended an extended study trip to Vienna and Italy, and she emigrated to America. Arriving in early 1849, she set up immediately in New York as a portrait painter and married William Dassel the same year. She received many commissions in the city and at Newport, Rhode Island, where she summered. The National Academy of Design elected her an honorary member in 1850. Her promising career was cut short in 1857, when she died of pneumonia.<sup>33</sup>



*Nantucket Indian Princess (Isabella Draper)*, 1851, by Hermine Dassel. Oil on canvas, 16 x 14 in. Courtesy of the Rhode Island Historical Society, gift of Julia Bullock (1883.4.1). This portrait depicts Isabella Draper, a young islander of mixed Nantucket Wampanoag and African American heritage.

## Nest of baskets, ca. 1870

James Wyer (1816–99). Birch, cane, brass, 14¼ x 12 in. (largest), 6¾ x 3½ in. (smallest)

Purchase, 1900 (1900.46.1)

Finely woven rattan work baskets were made extensively on Nantucket in the nineteenth century. Originating before the Civil War, they became the island's definitive folk-art product afterward. Many island craftspeople made them. Some were fashioned by Nantucketers stationed aboard the lightships that marked the shoals around the island, lending the form its most common name, the "lightship basket." Makers sometimes displayed their artistry and skill by fashioning elaborate sets of baskets, such as this nest, which were shown at the annual island Agricultural Fair and often sold to curious tourists. The island basket tradition continues today, with both new baskets and historic survivors forming a lucrative and competitive market.<sup>34</sup>

James Wyer (1816–99) was among the last generation of Nantucket whaling captains, rising through the ranks from cooper on the *Nantucket* (1837–41) to second mate on the *Monticello* (1841–45), first mate on the *Scotland* (1845–49), and finally captain of the *Spartan* (1851–53). He married Harriett Thompson in 1851, but she died after a long illness in 1860. He headed to California in 1862 and worked as a carpenter for a few years before returning to the island and marrying the widow Lois (Pease) Starbuck (1824–1904) in 1866. He appears to have started making baskets around this time, becoming, over thirty years, one of the island's premier artists of the form. This nest, originally comprising eight baskets, belonged to Wyer's stepdaughter, Mary E. Starbuck, one of the founders of the historical association.<sup>35</sup>



James Wyer, ca. 1860 (CDV1560).







## Robert Ratliff, 1879

J. Eastman Johnson (1824–1906). Oil on canvas, 29¼ x 23½ in.  
Gift of the artist, 1900 (1900.134.1)

Eastman Johnson (1824–1906) is the primary artist of national importance associated with Nantucket in the late nineteenth century. He and his wife began summering on the island in 1870 and returned annually through 1890, residing from 1871 onward at property he purchased on North Street (now Cliff Road). Over the next decade he created numerous important genre paintings of island scenes; in the 1880s, he turned toward portraiture, capturing island civic leaders and many retired mariners.<sup>36</sup>

This painting, from 1879, depicts English-born Robert Ratliff (1794–1882), who served in the Royal Navy during the Napoleonic Wars. In 1814, as a sailor in HMS *Albion*, he took part in the burning of Washington, D.C. The next year he was

aboard HMS *Northumberland* when the ship transported Napoleon Bonaparte to his final exile on St. Helena. As a peacetime merchant mariner, he was shipwrecked on Nantucket in 1820. He remained, marrying Judith (West) Robinson (1790–1871) in 1821 and making perhaps one whaling voyage before setting himself up as a master rigger on Nantucket's waterfront. The fire of 1846 destroyed his Straight Wharf premises, but he rebuilt. In the 1850s and 1860s, he was known for the pears he grew at his house on Quince Street. After his wife's death, poverty obliged him to move into the Quaise Asylum, where his stories attracted occasional interest in the press and brought Johnson to paint this portrait a few months shy of Ratliff's eighty-sixth birthday.<sup>37</sup>

## Two versions of *The Old Polpis House*, ca. 1899

James Walter Folger (1851–1918). Version 1: wood, 6¾ x 10 in. Purchase, 1901 (1901.4.1)

Version 2: painted wood, 6¾ x 10 in. Bequest of Margaret H. Crosby, 1963 (1963.9.1)

Nantucket's popularity as a summer destination grew in the last quarter of the nineteenth century based in part on the sentimental and idyllic vision of early America that its old buildings and quaint streets conjured for visitors. Woodcarver and painter James W. Folger (1851–1918) was one of many artists who promoted the island's old-fashioned atmosphere through his art.

A native of Nantucket, Folger was self taught except for a brief apprenticeship with a Boston wood carver. In the 1870s, he carved and painted shop signs, made decorative picture frames, sold life-like animal heads, exhibited bird carvings at the Agricultural Fair, and drew crayon portraits of his friends. In the 1880s, he turned increasingly to carving decorative bread boards and painting island personalities in nostalgic settings, such as Captain Charles Myrick telling stories, his cane poised like a harpoon; an elderly woman spinning yarn by the hearth; and Eliza Ann Barney sitting amid antiques in her Liberty Street house. The Old Mill, Sankaty Lighthouse, and 'Sconset were frequent subjects.<sup>38</sup>

In 1899, he developed "pictorial woodcarving," creating bas-relief depictions of characteristic island scenes, such as the ruined John Swain House at Polpis, the oldest surviving

house on island until it collapsed in 1902. Folger carved his nostalgic scenes in walnut or cherry, which he then finished with oil or painted in color. A reporter from the *New York Sunday Herald* visited his studio in 1904 and wrote, "His inspiration he takes directly from the life around him—bits of the coast line, old houses or fishermen's huts, an old sailor at his door, a quaint street corner—all of the many subjects which the picturesque old town and the beautiful island, with its exquisite atmospheric effects of moor, sea and sky, offer so richly to the artist." By 1910, Folger was able to turn out one of these scenes in about three weeks and sell it for between \$150 and \$300. (The painted ones cost more.) His most popular views he created repeatedly.<sup>39</sup>



James Walter Folger, ca. 1900, by Henry S. Wyer (1847–1920) (P1889).





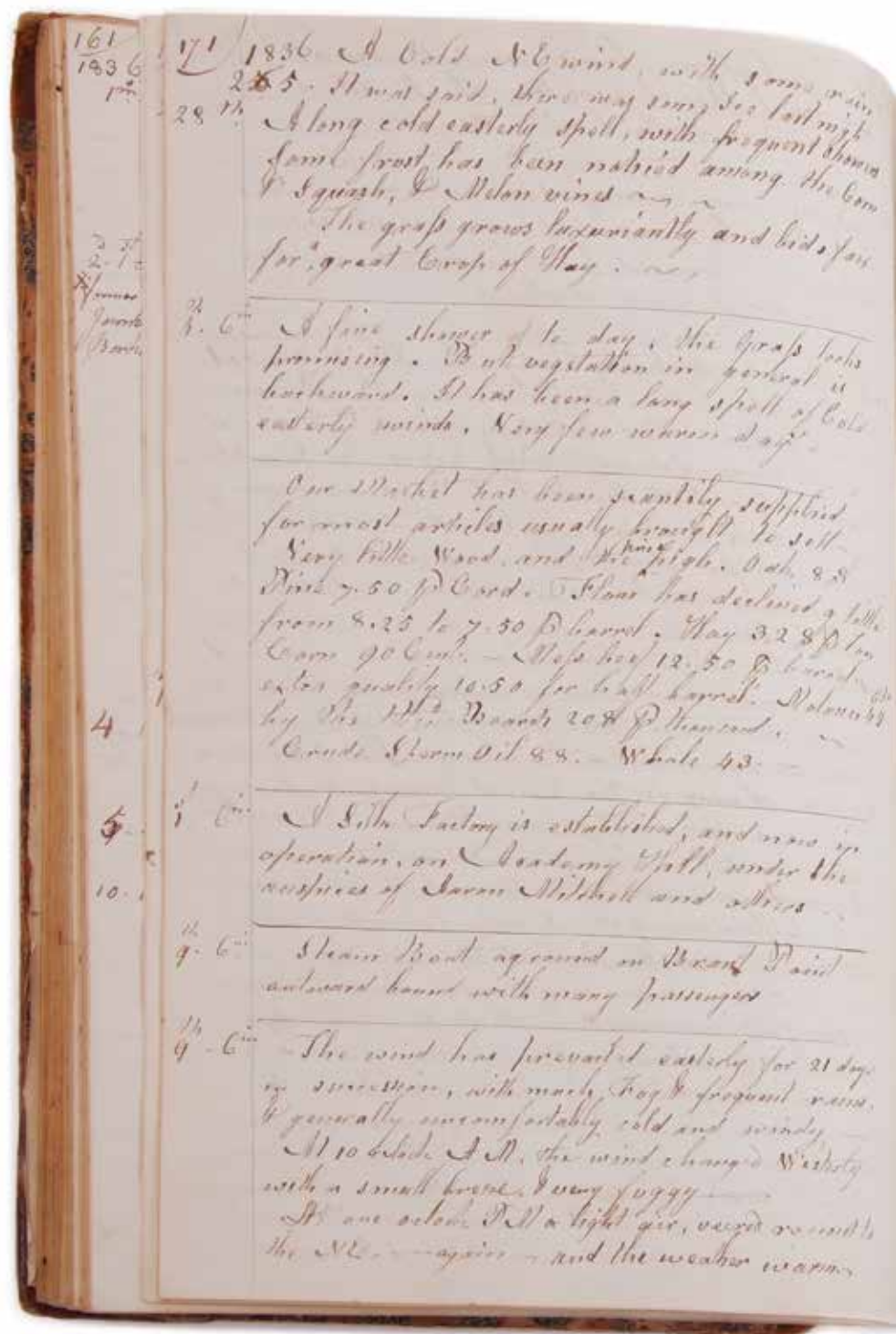


## "A record of the most remarkable events kept by Obed Macy, No. 5," 1827–38

Obed Macy (1762–1844). Ink on paper bound in leather, 13 x 8¼ in.

Lent by the heirs of Isaac and Philip Macy, 1901 (Ms. 96)

This is *the* great diary from early-nineteenth-century Nantucket, written by prominent Quaker merchant Obed Macy (1762–1844). Across six volumes compiled between 1799 and 1844, Macy recorded quotidian details of island life alongside personal opinions on national and international events. On this sample pair of pages from volume five, the range of Macy's gaze is fully displayed. The weather was of constant concern to him; he notes a continuing summer cold spell but says "the grass grows luxuriantly." He finds the market "scantily supplied for most articles," yet notes that the price of flour has declined seventy-five cents per barrel. Prices for crude sperm and whale oils, of particular local importance, are duly noted. He records the opening of the new Atlantic Silk Company factory and the grounding of the steamer *Telegraph*, but neglects to mention that the boat got off and sailed again the next day. On the facing page, Macy lists recent construction, including numerous houses, three new one-thousand-barrel-capacity cisterns, and two ships at Brant Point. The launch of one of these vessels, the *Lexington*, is celebrated at the bottom of the page in Macy's most florid prose: "She slid from her bed of ease, into the element intended for her destination during her existence in a most majestically grandeur, without obstruction or accidince. A large concourse of people collected on the occasion, notwithstanding the weather was cold and very windy."



1836. Wind at S.W. with a gentle breeze & foggy 172  
 10.6

Many new houses, stores &c are built up this  
 year.

Thomas Macy's Store in 1835  
 David Paddock's House  
 Thomas Coleman's house  
 Benjamin Coleman's House  
 Anne Bolt on the Town house W. 6000  
 Brig. Coffin house  
 42. 12. Collier's Store  
 3 New Cisterns 1000 each

1835 Thomas Watson's house  
 1836 Sarah New house by Sister Phoebe  
 1834. Seth Peck's house  
 1836 Seth Peck's on Academy Hill  
 Two New Sheds on Beach point  
 John Gull's New house in New town  
 42. 6. Gove's house  
 Thomas Coleman's house  
 Joseph Starbuck &c. the Golden Coffin  
 estimated for 8500 & building a house  
 on the West point  
 Deborah Chase's house  
 Benjamin Coleman's house

11. 20. Ship Leaning/Launched from Doran's point.  
 She slid from her bed of ease, into the element  
 intended for her destination during her existence  
 in a most majestic grade, without obstruction  
 or accident. A large concourse of people collected  
 on the occasion, notwithstanding the weather was cold  
 and very windy. — Banned by J. North in  
 Macy's W. & S. in. & Co. Field & others  
 the Lammage is about 400 Tons. —

Macy is best remembered for his 1835 book, *The History of Nantucket*, which draws in part from his own recollections. Herman Melville cites "the worthy Obed" in *Moby-Dick*. When Melville made his one and only visit to Nantucket in 1852, Macy's son Thomas gave him an inscribed copy of his father's *History* as a memento.



Obed Macy, 1834, attributed to William Swain (1803–47). Oil on canvas, 27 x 23 in. Gift of the Friends of the Nantucket Historical Association with contributions from the Macy family, 1994 (1994.11.1).

## *The Window Toward the Sea (Phebe Folger Pitman), 1886*

Elizabeth Rebecca Coffin (1851–1930). Oil on canvas, 25½ x 30¼ in.

Gift of the artist, 1902 (1902.2.1)

Elizabeth Rebecca Coffin (1851–1930) is the most important female artist associated with Nantucket. Born in Brooklyn, where she lived most of her life, she studied at Vassar, the Academy of Fine Arts in the Hague, the Art Students League in New York, and the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts. Among her instructors were Johan Philip Koelman, William Merritt Chase, and Thomas Eakins, whose realist approach is evident in Coffin's surviving works. Her father was from Nantucket and a descendant of the early English settlers; in the early 1880s, she began summering on island, eventually buying a house in which she later retired. Her signal achievement for Nantucket was the revival and transformation of the Coffin School, which she helped guide for more than two decades.<sup>40</sup>

Many of her works depict Nantucket scenes, often approaching the island and its people from a nostalgic point of view. In her portrayal of octogenarian Phebe (Folger) Pitman (1801–93) knitting by the window of her 'Sconset kitchen, the rustic details of the furniture and household goods combine with the contemplative aspect of the sitter to conjure up an image of quiet life in a rural village—the very image of quaint Nantucket that was a major selling point of the island as a summer destination in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Coffin exhibited this painting at the National Academy of Design in 1887.<sup>41</sup>



*Elizabeth Rebecca Coffin*, ca. 1900, by Thomas Eakins (1844–1916). Oil on canvas, 24 x 30 in. Collection of the Trustees of the Coffin School, Nantucket.







Unknown photographer, 1904 (GPN2842).



## Fair Street Museum, 1904

George Wesley Watson (1875–1950), architect; Aberthaw Construction Company, Boston, Mass., engineers and builders.

Concrete, steel, wood, glass

Commissioned by the Nantucket Historical Association, 1904

The early leaders of the Nantucket Historical Association first broached the idea of building a fireproof building to protect the organization's collections in 1898, but it took six years to gather the necessary community and financial support to begin construction. Opened in 1904, the Fair Street Museum laid aside Nantucket's architectural traditions in favor of modern materials and forms better suited to the goals of preservation and display. The building, erected behind the Fair Street Meeting House, utilized the latest advances in concrete-frame construction, cast in place and reinforced with steel, to support a two-story, open-plan exhibition hall illuminated by a central skylight. According to the newspaper, the new structure generated "much interest" and marked "a radical change in building construction" on the island.<sup>42</sup>

During the 1870s, innovations in steel reinforcement led to the development of the earliest concrete-frame buildings in the United States. By the end of the century, concrete was the material of choice for utilitarian structures such as factories and warehouses.<sup>43</sup> Careful studies of the Baltimore fire of 1904 demonstrated the value of concrete as a fireproofing material to the officers of the historical association and emphasized the strength and durability of reinforced-concrete construction.<sup>44</sup>

The Fair Street Museum was built by the Aberthaw Construction Company, whose purchase of the regional patent rights to Ernest Ransome's steel-reinforcement techniques in 1896 positioned it as a leader in the growing market for concrete buildings. The firm garnered renown in 1903 for building the Harvard University Stadium, the largest reinforced-concrete structure in the world at the time. By choosing Aberthaw to build its museum, the historical association recognized the value of using modern tools to safeguard and celebrate island heritage, creating a building rooted in the present day to protect the evidence of the past.<sup>45</sup>

MJK



Concrete sample from the Fair Street Museum (2008.8003.1).

# Logbook of trading and whaling voyages, 1770–78

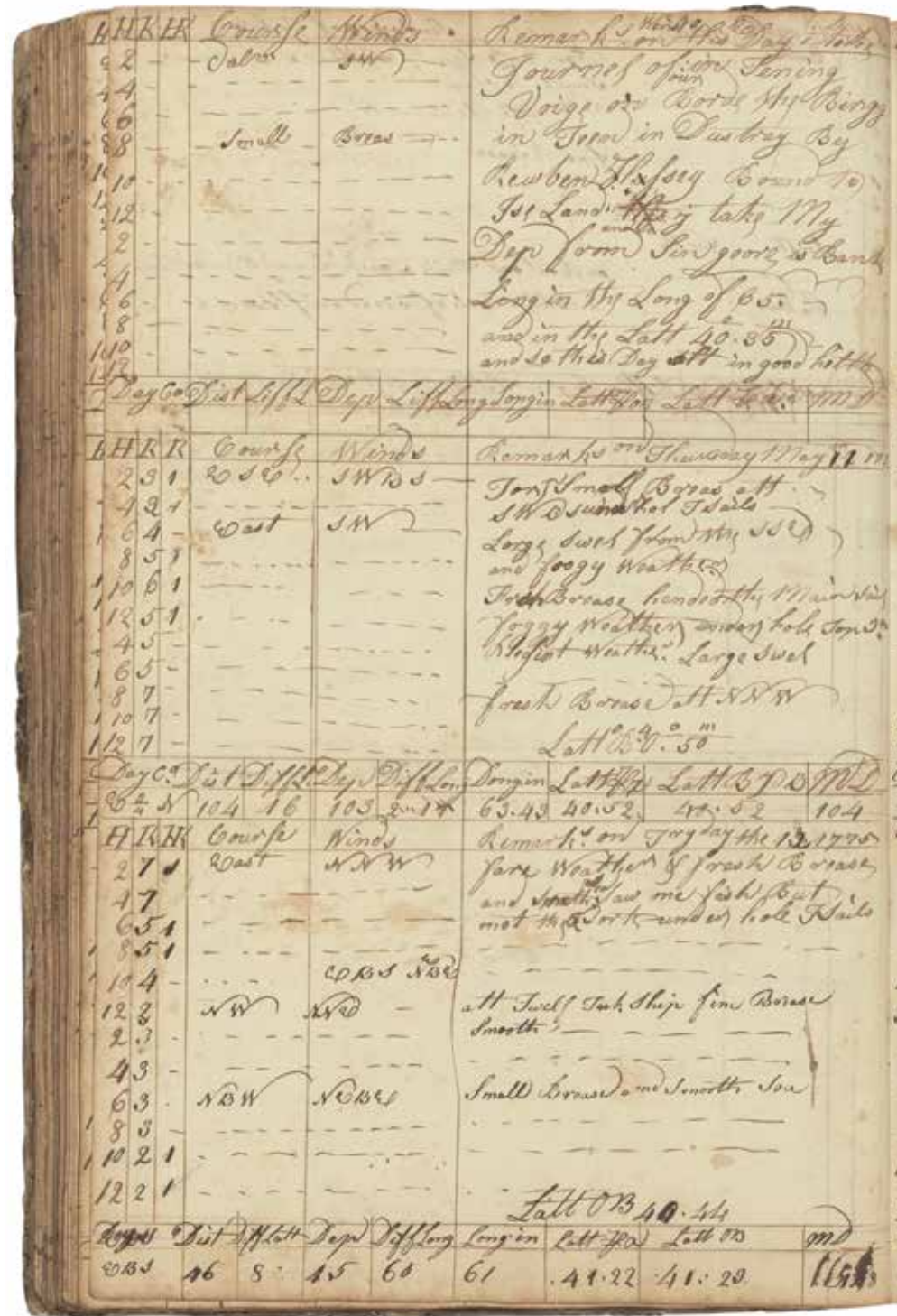
Reuben Hussey (1749–1815). Ink on paper bound in leather, 12<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> x 8<sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x <sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in.

Gift of Margaret Ewer Coffin, 1905 (Ms. 220, log 85)

Whale products were colonial New England's second most valuable export in 1770—after codfish—and Nantucket supplied over half of the region's production.<sup>40</sup> Shipping whale oil and candles to market formed part of the island's extensive participation in coastal and international trade. This logbook records fragments of trading voyages to Canada, Spain, Ireland, and England in the brigs *Friendship*, *Hanover*, *Neptune*, and *Industry* as well as whaling cruises to the Falkland Islands, Brazil, the Leeward Islands, and the Cape Verde Islands in the brigs *America*, *Industry*, and *Amazon*, all witnessed by Reuben Hussey (1749–1815), mate on each of these journeys.

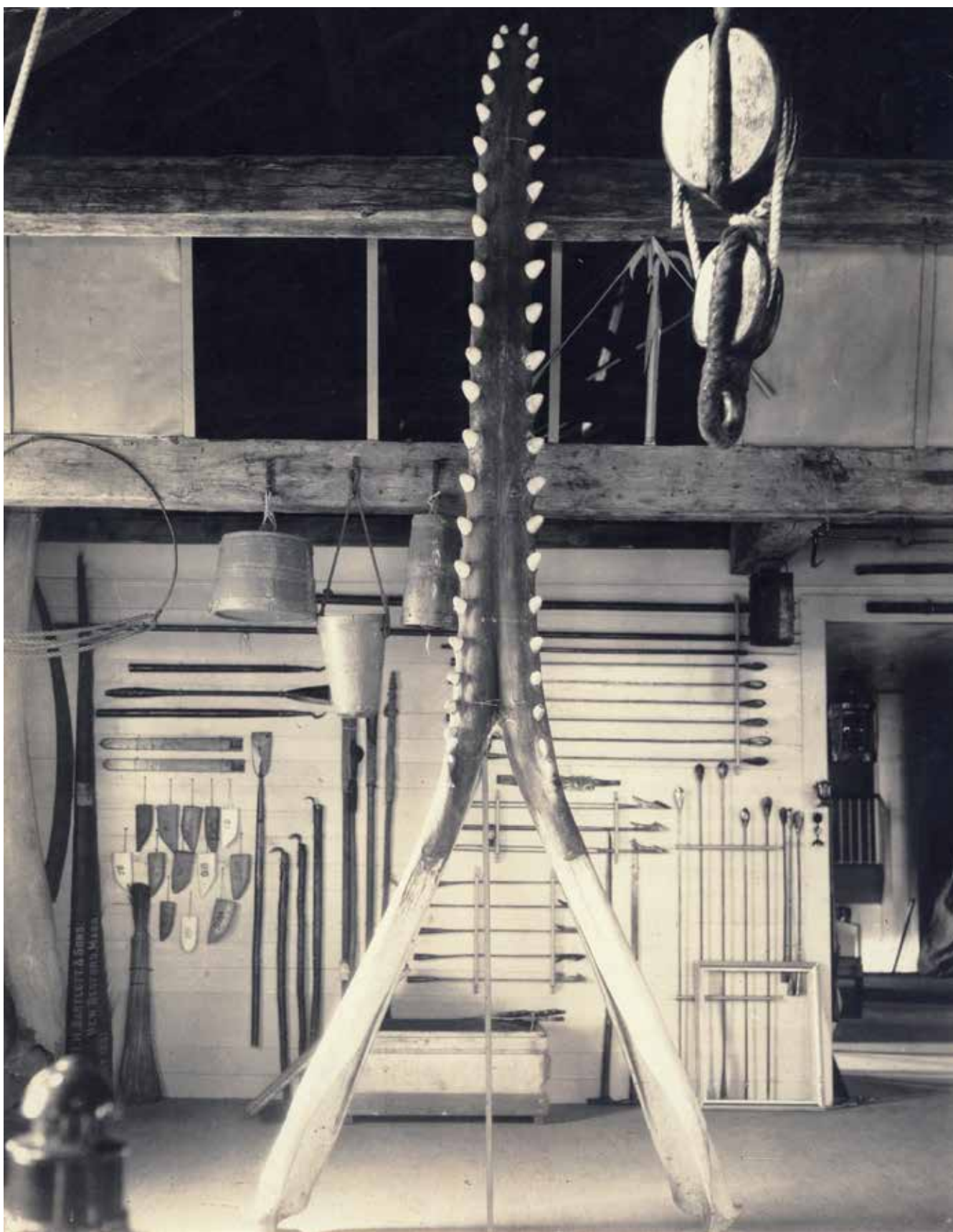
Hussey purchased this book in London in 1770 and filled it over eight years. Like most true logbooks, in contrast to personal journals, it focuses (more or less methodically) on recording wind and weather and vessel speed, course, and position. Yet, human details show through, even while raising unanswered questions, as in this entry for May 10, 1770:

6 [a.m.] all most Calm  
8 half after 7 a klok Winds Started to NNW  
10 William Walie fel over Borde  
12 Sounded got no ground



The book documents how the *Neptune*, in an act of kindness, “Bor Down to Schooner Belonging to Mardle hade [Marblehead] a Let them haiv Sum Beef & Bread” (May 17, 1773). A few months later, aboard *America*, it reads “all hans imployed agiting Redy the Boats for the bisnes” (August 19, 1773) and “Nothing to Be Sean to Day in the Whail Way” (September 16, 1773). A few years later, the *Industry* departs from Tenerife, “all in helth But Three with the Pox” (December 27, 1775). Finally, readers learn that aboard the *Amazon* there appeared “Rain Squals of Capt Coffin on Borde”—the captain was in a raging temper (August 27, 1777).





Unknown photographer, ca. 1934 (P14982).



# Sperm-whale mandible, 1865

*Physeter macrocephalus*. Bone and ivory, 14 ft. 9 in. x 5 ft. 9 in.  
Lent by the Nantucket Atheneum, 1905 (1998.1147.1)

This massive jawbone, from a “ninety barrel” adult sperm whale, came to Nantucket in the bark *Islander* in 1865. Family tradition credits James H. Christian (1838–94), a boatsteerer on the voyage, with striking the whale, although it would have been the responsibility of Captain William Cash (1816–82) or one of his mates to kill it. It was also Captain Cash’s right, as both owner and master of the *Islander*, to claim the jawbone and bring it home if he wanted to. The *Islander*’s logbook survives but is silent about when the giant jawbone came aboard and how it was acquired.<sup>47</sup>

The jawbone attracted much attention. Captain Cash placed it on the second floor of the stable behind his house, and many visitors came to see it. Children even used it as a slide.<sup>48</sup> P. T. Barnum, the New York showman, saw it in August 1866, after which he wrote Captain Cash:

*When I was at Nantucket recently I called to see your whales jaw. It is a stunner, and I was sorry I could not see the man who captured it. I hope you will carefully read the enclosed*

*Circular. Perhaps you may then feel that if the jaw was properly placed in my museum, and its history & your name legibly inscribed on it, more of your friends (as well as the great public) would see it, than they would on your own premises. Perhaps also these considerations would induce you to hand your name down to a grateful posterity by being identified as the DONOR of this Jaw to the Free Museum in New York. However, if you don’t see it in that light, will you please inform me whether you will sell it to be placed in my museum and if so, for what price, & oblige, Truly yours, P. T. Barnum<sup>49</sup>*

Within a few years, Captain Cash grew weary of curiosity seekers and sold the jawbone to the Nantucket Atheneum for its museum. In 1905, the Atheneum transferred it to the Nantucket Historical Association. Although the association considered selling the mandible to another collection for \$150 in 1957, it remains on island as one of the collection’s treasures today.<sup>50</sup>



P. T. Barnum’s letter to Captain William Cash, 1866. Gift of Mrs. E. A. Gray, 1987 (Ms. 228).

## Chair from the wreck of the *Queen*, 1813

Unknown British maker. Painted wood and cane, 33 x 17 x 18¼ in.

Lent by the Nantucket Atheneum, 1905 (A123)

This simple English Neoclassical side chair came ashore in January 1813 from the wreck of the ship *Queen* and was preserved for many years in the house of John Meader (1797–1874). After Meader died, his executor, Joseph B. Macy, purchased the chair for \$1.10 and presented it to the museum at the Nantucket Atheneum. When that museum closed, the chair came to the Nantucket Historical Association.<sup>51</sup>

The *Queen* and the *Sir Sidney Smith*, English merchantmen bound for the northern coast of South America, were captured in separate engagements in late 1812 by the American privateer *General Armstrong*, commanded by Captain John Barnard. The cloth, garments, food, alcohol, building materials, and other goods in the *Queen*'s hold had an estimated value between £70,000 and £100,000, likely making the ship the most valuable prize captured by

an American vessel during the War of 1812. Captain Barnard ordered his prize crews to carry the ships into New York, but on December 21 the *Sir Sidney Smith* wrecked on Bass Rip, off Siasconset, where the crew froze to death and the vessel's cargo was lost. Fourteen days later, the *Queen* also wrecked at Nantucket, coming ashore in pieces at Nobadeer. Cargo soon lined the shore from Miacomet Rip to Great Point, and islanders in the hundreds showed up to remove the goods for their own use. A chimney at 'Sconset is said to have been built with bricks "of uncommon size" from the wreck. When Captain Barnard's agents arrived to reclaim the salvage, little was forthcoming. "Law-suits and trouble ensued," Arthur H. Gardner later noted, "not only with the agents, but among the people themselves, who charged one another with stealing rescued goods."<sup>52</sup>



Interior of the Atheneum Museum, ca. 1875, by Harry Platt (GPN499). Janitor Joseph Swain, caretaker of the Atheneum collection, stands next to Captain Cash's giant sperm-whale mandible. The chair from the *Queen* hangs on the wall in the distance.







# Models of the Nantucket Marine Camels and the ship *Wm. H. Harrison*, 1841

Thurber & Crosby, Nantucket. Painted wood, 13½ x 92¼ x 59½ in. (camels), 50½ x 100 x 20 in. (ship)

Lent by the Nantucket Atheneum, 1905 (2017.1030.1 & .2)

For centuries, a sandbar blocked the entrance to Nantucket harbor, hindering the passage of heavily laden vessels above a certain size. As early as 1827, islanders discussed using a mobile dry dock to float ships over the bar, based on a Dutch invention, the “ship camels,” from more than a century before. Shipping merchant Peter Folger Ewer (1800–55) revived the idea and, in early 1841, hired boatbuilders John G. Thurber and Jesse Crosby to make this working model, complete with a sample ship, to demonstrate the concept and attract investors.<sup>53</sup>

The camels comprised two separate flat-bottomed hulls, each 135 feet long, linked by submerged chains. Positioned around a vessel and drawn together by the chains, the hulls

would be pumped out, raising the assembly and its burden high enough to be towed across the bar by a steamboat. Each hull had a steam plant to power windlasses, pump, and a four-horsepower engine driving a propeller. The model shows the windlasses used to haul the chains, but the propellers, rudders, and smokestacks that were aboard the real camels are not shown, perhaps because they were not yet part of the design when this model was made.

Successfully funded and built, the full-sized camels carried their first ship over the bar in September 1842. They operated until 1849, by which time the reduced whaling traffic in the harbor could not sustain their expense. They were broken up in 1853.



The model ship carried in the camels does not represent a specific Nantucket vessel. It was named *Wm. H. Harrison* as a patriotic gesture following President Harrison's election in late 1840.

## Panel of decorative tiles, ca. 1842

Manifattura Giustiniani, Naples, Italy. Earthenware tiles with vitreous glaze in wood frame, 55 x 56 in.

Lent by the Nantucket Atheneum, 1905 (1937.37.1)

Beginning in the sixteenth century, it became fashionable for affluent young men and some women to visit the cultural capitals of Europe as part of their classical education. The so-called “Grand Tour” could last months or years and required substantial means and significant leisure time. These “tourists” were often accompanied by a teacher or chaperone and were expected to return home with souvenirs as well as a refined sensibility formed by exposure to art and ancient monuments. With its bucolic countryside and inexhaustible classical heritage, Italy was often the highlight of the tour. American participation in the Grand Tour was rare until regular transatlantic steamship service began in 1838.<sup>54</sup>

In 1841, Paul Mitchell Jr. (1801–77) withdrew from his family’s whaling business and embarked on a two-year European tour with the painter William Swain (1803–47). They explored Britain, France, Switzerland, Germany, Italy, and other nations, “walking through the countries in preference to other modes of traveling in order to view them at their leisure.”<sup>55</sup>

Mitchell purchased this decorative panel in Naples as a souvenir of their journey. It reproduces a floor mosaic from the House of the Tragic Poet, a Roman villa in Pompeii that was buried by the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in AD 79. Excavated in 1824, the villa quickly became famous for its elaborate mosaic floors, including the one reproduced here that warns visitors to “beware of the dog.” The panel’s manufacturer, the Giustiniani family, specialized in reproduction antique vases, dinnerware, and other fine objects for the tourist market, winning many prizes at national and international exhibitions. Mitchell displayed the panel at his estate, Maple Hill, in Geneva, New York, and his home in Cambridge, Massachusetts, before donating it to the Nantucket Atheneum in 1876.<sup>56</sup>

MJK



*A Greek Soldier* (unfinished), ca. 1843, by William Swain (1803–47). Oil and graphite on canvas, 20 x 15 in. Gift of Susan and Stuart P. Feld, 1988 (1988.82.1). Swain painted this portrait shortly before the 1843 Greek Revolution while on the Grand Tour with Paul Mitchell Jr. The figure’s distinctive uniform—particularly the cap, embroidered jacket, and knee-length *fustanella*—identifies him as a Greek *evzone* or light infantry soldier.











## Sewing machine, ca. 1855

Wheeler & Wilson Manufacturing Company, Watertown, Conn. Cast iron, steel, wood, 37 x 27<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> x 16<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> in.

Gift of Elizabeth C. Bennett, 1905 (1905.43.1)

This sewing machine is the first one brought to Nantucket. It cost \$120, a substantial sum to invest in a new and relatively untried technology. To ease the burden and share the risk, seven local women banded together and bought the machine as a joint venture. They divided the price into twelve shares of \$10 each, and each woman purchased one or more shares. The women then had use of the machine for a week at a time before it rotated to the next owner. The owners were Elizabeth G. Macy, Ann E. Macy, Elizabeth C. Crosby, Eliza Coffin, Elizabeth Starbuck, Lydia Morton, and Mary Baxter. Susan E. Brock, the historical association's curator, noted in 1906, "The arrangement seems to have worked satisfactorily

for awhile, but one woman appreciating its usefulness more than the rest, desired to own it, and gradually bought out all the others, and from her family it comes to us." The donor, Elizabeth C. Bennett, was owner Elizabeth C. Crosby's niece.<sup>57</sup>

This machine creates a lockstitch using a rotary hook and stationary bobbin mechanism patented by Allen Wilson in 1852. The machine's working surface has been enlarged through the addition of a wood platform around the small original cloth-plate. Wheeler & Wilson machines were the best-selling sewing machines of the 1850s and 1860s.

## *Captain Absalom F. Boston, ca. 1835*

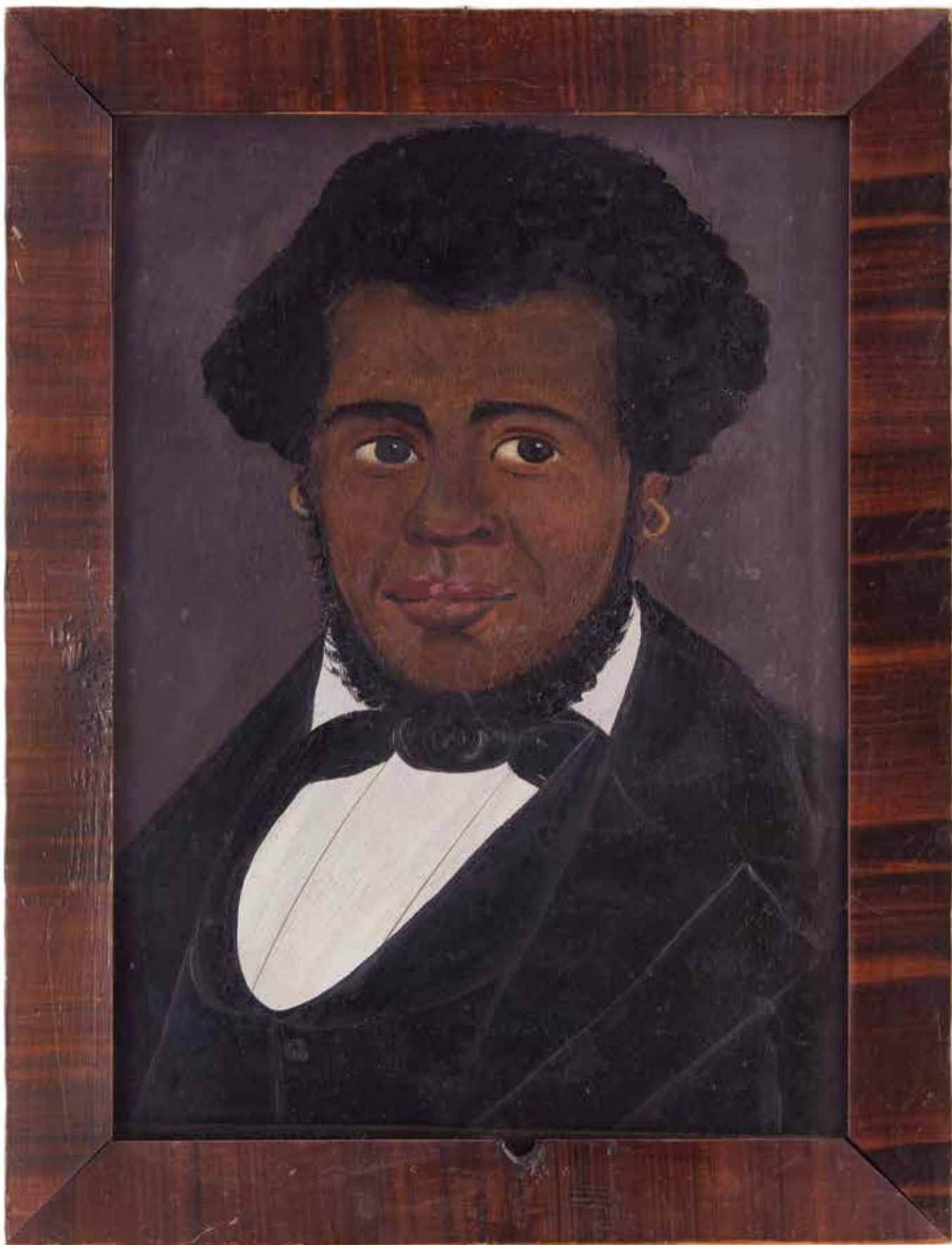
Unknown Prior-Hamblin School artist. Oil on board, 14½ x 10⅝ in.

Gift of Sampson D. Pompey, 1906 (1906.56.1)

Captain Absalom F. Boston (1785–1855) was a leading figure in Nantucket's African American community in the first half of the nineteenth century. He was a third-generation islander, and he and his family figured in a number of important milestones of local racial equality. An uncle, Prince Boston, was involved in the 1773 legal case that set in motion the end of slavery on Nantucket. When his daughter, Phebe Ann, was denied admission to Nantucket High School, Boston began litigation that spurred the desegregation of local schools in 1846. Boston himself commanded the island's first all-black whaling crew when he took the *Industry* out to the Cape Verde Islands in 1822. The voyage, although not a financial

success, built on his experience on many previous whaling voyages, including those of the *Lydia* (1808–9), *Thomas* (1809–11), and *Independence* (1817–19). He found greater success on land, where he engaged in real-estate trading and innkeeping.

Boston was married three times and had eight children who survived infancy. His first two wives, Mary (d. 1813) and Phebe Spriggins (d. 1826), predeceased him. His third wife, Hannah Cooke (1796–1857), worked as stewardess aboard the steamer *Island Home* after his death, until her own death in 1857.<sup>58</sup>







## Center table, 1852

Shadrach Gifford (1803–72). Veneered pine, 51 x 41 x 24 in. (with top tilted)

Purchase, 1909 (1909.43.1)

Carpenter Shadrach Gifford (1803–72) made this elaborately inlaid center table in 1852 while renting a house on Union Street from Eliza W. Mitchell. Inside one drawer he scrawled the number 1384 as a reminder of the number of pieces of veneer he used. While he built the table of pine, he cut the veneer from mahogany, satinwood, walnut, birch, curly maple, rosewood, and other hardwoods. The table's peachwood components were taken from a tree planted by Eliza Mitchell herself in the yard of the Union Street house.<sup>59</sup>

Gifford was born in Falmouth, Massachusetts, and came to live on Nantucket around 1830, the year he married Eliza Wheatly of New York. He appears to have sailed on a number of whaling voyages, leading eventually to his advancement to first mate of the New Bedford ship *Hercules* from 1845 to 1849. Census records from the 1850s record him as a shipwright or ship carpenter. Because only a small amount of shipbuilding took place on Nantucket during that decade, Gifford probably worked at the marine railway on Brant Point, where many island-owned whalers, coasters,

and fishing schooners were hauled out for repairs. A fire destroyed the marine railway in 1859, and Gifford and his family moved away sometime in the early 1860s.

Gifford was clearly a talented carpenter. In 1842, he advertised for sale a "First rate Spring Cart, built of the best of stock, and well ironed and painted," which interested parties could inspect at his shop on Old North Wharf. He exhibited a pair of heavy cart wheels at the island's first Agricultural Fair in 1856, "made in the best possible manner, that looked as if they would wear a century." He displayed this center table at the 1861 fair, as well as a bureau, a workbox, and some miniature chairs and tables. He won a premium of \$2 in recognition of his work.<sup>60</sup>

Eliza Mitchell purchased the table from Gifford when he left the island. The historical association purchased it from the estate of her son, Joseph W. Clapp, in 1909.

## Bell, ca. 1850

Edward Field (1801–90). Bronze, 16 x 15 in.  
Lent by Mrs. J. E. Walker, ca. 1911 (1938.18.1)

Edward Field (1801–90) opened a copper-smithing and brass-founding business in partnership with Edmund W. Macy (1795–1858) about 1821. In 1823, the men dissolved their partnership, and Field continued in business at Macy & Field's premises on Washington Street for the next three decades, making all manner of articles in brass and bronze, including bells and fittings, fasteners, household utensils, building hardware, and tools. In 1823, he cast the brass components for the first town clock. In addition to this bell, made for an unknown client, the firm made bells for ships and schools, including the bell for the Coffin School. In the early 1850s, Field took a greater interest in ship owning and the whale-oil business and passed the foundry to his brother Benjamin (1811–75), who continued operating it until his death. The foundry building on Washington Street, which still stands, was later home to the Mazerolle Boat Shop and artist Ruth Haviland Sutton's Candle House Studio.



These miniature andirons were the last items made at Field's foundry in 1875. Gift of Bernice Winslow Foye, 1969 (1969.21.1a & .1b).



Edward Field, ca. 1870 (GPN1494).







## Silk apron, 1836

Atlantic Silk Co., Nantucket, maker; Boston & Lynn Silk Printing Co., Lynn, Mass., printer. Dyed and printed silk, 28 x 24 in.  
Gift of Elizabeth Stone, 1912 (1912.15.1)

A mania to create an American silk industry swept the United States in the 1830s. On Nantucket, Samuel H. Jenks, publisher of the *Nantucket Inquirer*, promoted the planting of mulberry trees on public and private land to nurture silk worms. William H. Gardner, island agent for Kenrick's Nursery in Newton, Massachusetts, brought William Kenrick's influential book, *The American Silk Grower's Guide*, to Nantucket in 1835. That same year, Gardner joined Jenks, shipping merchant Aaron Mitchell, and others in founding the Atlantic Silk Company to manufacture silk cloth. The company's purpose-built factory featured the second steam-powered silk loom put into operation in the world, which was installed by its inventor, Gamaliel Gay of Providence, Rhode Island, in whose honor Nantucket's Gay Street was named in 1836.<sup>61</sup>

The factory began operation in mid-1836. An open house in December displayed the firm's products, including "Silk Aprons and Handkerchiefs . . . some comprising six or eight

gorgeous colors and dazzling figures intermingled. These articles being on sale, were rapidly bought up—most of the visitors feeling desirous to possess a memento of the early establishment of this important branch of industry upon our island."<sup>62</sup> Although the silk company won awards for the quality of its cloth, leading one magazine to declare, "The poor, barren, despised sand hills of Nantucket are destined soon to become a second Lowell," a harsh winter in 1838 killed mulberry trees nationwide, and the company faltered, lasting only until 1842.<sup>63</sup>

This fancy apron is a rare surviving example of the company's work. The fine plain-weave silk was woven on island; the dark purple field and the hand-dyed and roller-printed borders were added off-island by the Boston & Lynn Silk Printing Company.<sup>64</sup> The name "Lucy C. Starbuck" is written in script at the hem.



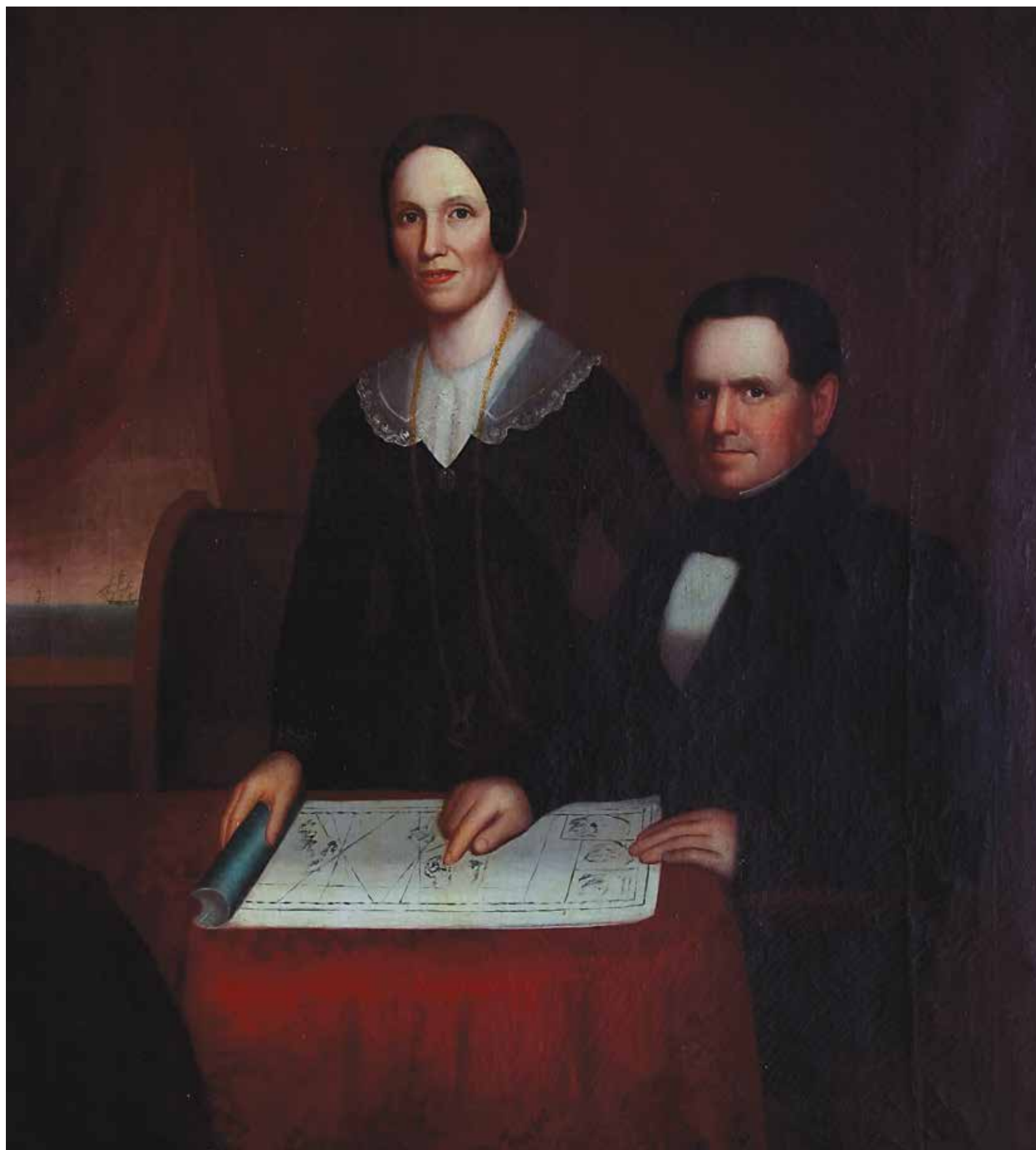
## *Captain Robert and Eliza McCleave, ca. 1842–43*

James S. Hathaway (active ca. 1839–50). Oil on canvas, 51 $\frac{3}{8}$  x 45 $\frac{1}{2}$  in.

Gift of Mr. Wood, 1913 (1913.9.1)

Captain Robert M. McCleave (1809–78) went to sea in his teens, following in the wake of his sea-captain father. On multiple voyages in the ships *Loper* and *Rambler*, he worked his way up until he was given command of the *Rambler* in 1835. On three successive voyages to the Pacific between then and 1847, he and his crews gathered nearly 5,500 barrels of oil, which sold for a total of \$141,719. He next commanded the *Richard Mitchell* from 1848 to 1852 (oil sold for \$69,221) and then finished his career in the *Oliver Crocker* of New Bedford on a final trip to the Pacific in 1854–58 (oil sold for \$74,313). McCleave's percentage of the profits of these voyages permitted him and his wife, Eliza Ann Chase (1811–95), whom he married in 1829, a life of comfortable prosperity. It also allowed the couple to commission this ambitious double portrait from artist James S. Hathaway.<sup>65</sup>

In the first twenty-nine years of their marriage, Robert was home for a total of only five years. Hathaway reflects Eliza's vital role in managing the couple's affairs ashore by depicting her as an equal partner in their family enterprise—she literally stands beside him, holding open a chart with him. The chart, which likely represents New Zealand and the Tasman Sea, is further significant as a reflection of Robert's accomplishments. In 1838, he and the *Rambler* carried to New Zealand the consular documents that established merchant James R. Clendon at the Bay of Islands as the first U.S. consul in New Zealand.<sup>66</sup>







## Piece of twine, 1820–21

Benjamin Lawrence (1799–1879). Natural fibers on card in ivory frame, 4 x 5 in.

Gift of Alexander Starbuck, 1914 (1914.15.1)

This 2½-inch length of twine is the sole surviving artifact from the wreck of the Nantucket whaleship *Essex*. Twenty-one-year-old boatsteerer Benjamin Lawrence (1799–1879) made it during the long months he spent in one of the ship's whaleboats. It may be just the remaining fragment of a much longer length of twine created by twisting odd pieces of fiber together to form a single strand to use for small jobs in the boat. Lawrence kept the fragment after his rescue as a memento.

On November 20, 1820, an enraged sperm whale, eighty-five feet long and weighing about eighty tons, rammed the *Essex* while the ship was hunting whales near the equator in the remote Pacific. The ship promptly filled with water and rolled over, a total wreck. No whaling vessel had been attacked and sunk by a whale before. The twenty men in the crew were left in their boats, 1,300 miles from land.

Fearing cannibals on the closest islands—twenty to thirty days' sail away—Captain George Pollard Jr. and his mates, Owen Chase and Matthew Joy, set course for South America, hoping to run 3,000 miles against contrary winds before exhausting the limited food and water their three small boats could carry. Three months later, passing ships picked up just

five emaciated survivors from two of the boats. Three other men were stranded on a remote island where the company had stopped for a week, and twelve men were dead—seven of them eaten in desperation by their starving shipmates.

Benjamin Lawrence returned to his native Nantucket after the disaster. He continued whaling, commanding the ship *Huron* of Hudson, New York, from 1832 to 1836 and then becoming part owner and master of the Nantucket brig *Dromo* on three voyages into the Atlantic between 1838 and 1841. He was keeper of the Quaise Asylum, the island's poorhouse, for many years beginning in 1848, and in later life he farmed and fished from a home in 'Sconset. He married Eliza Pitman (1806–1900) in 1824, and they reared six children together. Their eldest died rounding Cape Horn in 1849 when he fell from the jib boom of the whaler *Montano*.<sup>67</sup>



Captain Benjamin Lawrence, 1860s (GPN971).

## Deed to Coatue, 1665

Ink and wax on vellum, 7<sup>9</sup>/<sub>16</sub> x 6 in.

Gift of Eunice S. Barney Swain, 1916 (Ms. 17, volume 1)

The first English people arrived on Nantucket in 1659, forming a settlement on the north shore around what is now Capaum Pond. The English adopted the native Wampanoag people's fish and shellfish foodways, expanded corn growing, and introduced sheep-herding and cattle-grazing to the island in hopes of developing trade. As their community grew, the English took control of ever greater portions of the island from the native inhabitants, negotiating purchases and gifts and securing the right to graze their animals across the entire island. In this early deed, first signed in 1665, Wanackmamack and Nickanoose, sachems of the two largest Wampanoag settlements on the

island, gave the land on the north side of Nantucket harbor to Edward Starbuck, who soon after transferred it to the company of English purchasers of the island. One of the witnesses is "Asasummoo or John Gibbs," a Wampanoag man who became the island's first native Christian minister.

This important document is one of a number of early land records held by the historical association. Many of them were gathered and preserved by Benjamin Franklin Folger (1777–1859), a 'Sconset folklorist and genealogist. He left them at his death to his friends Nathaniel and Eliza Barney, whose granddaughter gave them to the association in 1916.<sup>68</sup>

knows all men by the presence that now wamuch  
Nicanor and Nalbootant of our free and  
voluntary willees doe give freely to Edward  
Starbuck all that tract of land called by the indians  
our cowrightest and by the english the northeast point  
of nantucket to him his heirs executors and assigns  
forever to enjoy and quietly to possess and use by the  
power under all our hands and Seals as fully as  
confirming it to the said Edward Starbuck and make  
it his as it is our own with all the timber marsh  
beaches and ponds or what so ever priviledges both  
or may belonge thereto unto in witness whereunto  
we have her unto set to our hands and Seals the  
third of January 1667 the marks of

Nicanor Starbuck and Nalbootant wamuch Nicanor  
in the presence of

the mark R of  
Richard Swaine

Jane Swaine

also Summoo or John

this Deed of Affirmation unto the  
whole company the signers  
of Nantucket witness my hand  
this 30 of August 1666 Edward Starbuck

Nicanor his Mark

Namachmann  
the above written  
in presence of the  
Junt. 12. 1677.

Nicanor, acknowledged  
to be their act and Deed  
in general court, as attested  
Matt. Mayhew Secy



## Susan's tooth, 1829

Frederick Myrick (1808–62). Ink on whale ivory,

6¼ x 2¾ x 2 in.

Purchase, 1918 (1918.15.1)

This scrimshawed sperm-whale tooth is part of a series engraved by Frederick Myrick (1808–62) aboard the ship *Susan* of Nantucket between 1826 and 1829. Myrick is the earliest scrimshawer known to both sign and date his work; as a result, his pieces have become highly prized by collectors and museums alike. Myrick's life and work were first brought to public attention by islander Everett U. Crosby in his 1955 book *Susan's Teeth and Much About Scrimshaw*. At that time, only eight teeth were known. Today, thirty-seven have come to light, all similar but no two exactly alike.<sup>69</sup>

A typical *Susan's* tooth contains two vignettes of a ship, one a-whaling and one homeward bound. An anchor, crossed flags, and a patriotic eagle are typically engraved around the tip of the tooth. The vignettes are titled, the artist's name and the date appear in a band, and the ship and its captain are always named—usually the *Susan*, Captain Frederick Swain, but the *Barclay* of Nantucket, the *Frances* of New Bedford, and the *Ann* of London also appear. This oft-quoted doggerel always completes the composition:

*Death to the living[,] long life to the killers*

*Success to sailors wives & greasy luck to whalers*<sup>70</sup>

Frederick Myrick was born on Nantucket and first went to sea in the New Bedford ship *Columbus* (1825–26). His next, and apparently last, voyage was aboard the *Susan*. Myrick married Mary P. Folger in 1833, and, sometime after 1847, they moved to Auburn, New York. The historical association now holds three *Susan's* teeth. This is the first one collected; which was purchased in 1918 for \$15.<sup>71</sup>









## Locomotive bell, 1879

Hinkley Locomotive Works, Boston, Mass. Bronze, 16½ x 15½ in.

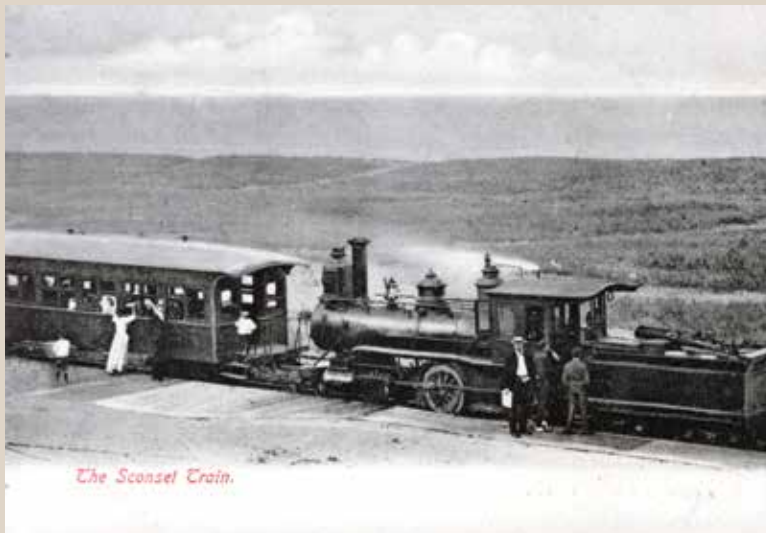
Purchase, 1918; exchanged to David Gray, 1955; subsequent gift of Nancy Gray in memory of David Gray, 1976 (1918.21.1, 1976.79.1)

In 1881, a narrow-gauge railroad was built on Nantucket to spur south-shore real-estate development. It ran at first from town to Surfside, then an extension to 'Sconset opened in 1884. The line operated summers only, shuttling tourists to beaches and lodgings, although special service was run from time to time to bring salvaged cargoes into town from winter shipwrecks. Operating losses and high annual repair bills for storm-damaged trackbed led to the sale of the railroad to new owners in 1895; they abandoned the line to Surfside and laid out a new right of way from town to 'Sconset via Tom Nevers. The railroad operated until 1917, when the arrival of automobiles on island made it unnecessary.<sup>72</sup>

The railroad company purchased its original rolling stock second hand. The locomotive, built by the Baldwin Locomotive Works in 1877 for a railroad in Ohio, was named *Dionis*, to honor Dionis Coffin, one of the island's early English settlers. When the *Dionis* wore out and was scrapped

in 1901, the railroad purchased old engine *No. 1* from the Boston, Revere Beach & Lynn Railroad, a locomotive built by the Hinkley Locomotive Works in 1879.<sup>73</sup>

This bell is from engine *No. 1*. When *No. 1* was itself replaced in 1910, its bell, erroneously believed to be from the *Dionis*, was moved to new engine *No. 2*, "in place of the bell which came with the outfit, and which never had a very pleasing sound to the islanders."<sup>74</sup> When the railroad was scrapped in 1918, the historical association purchased the bell for \$25 from the company dismantling the road, still believing it to be from the *Dionis*. In 1955, David Gray, a summer resident and avid railroad collector, offered to give the association a spectacular example of scrimshaw in exchange for the bell (see page 102). The association's leadership agreed, and the bell left the collection. Gray's widow subsequently gave it back in 1976, alongside Gray's other Nantucket railroad memorabilia.<sup>75</sup>



Engine *No. 1* at the 'Sconset platform, with the Atlantic Ocean beyond, ca. 1905 (PC-Railroad-6).





## Model of a Quaker hearse, 1919

Roland Bunker Hussey (1851–1923). Painted wood, 14¼ x 23¾ x 11 in.

Gift of the artist, 1919 (1919.14.1)

The Quaker belief in simplicity and plainness extended even to the dead, who, on Nantucket in the second quarter of the nineteenth century, were placed in simple pine coffins and carried to their final rest in the artless two-wheeled cart depicted in this model. Furthermore, most Nantucket Quaker burials were left unmarked, the faithful believing headstones to be idolatrous.

Roland B. Hussey (1851–1923), publisher and editor of Nantucket's *Inquirer and Mirror* newspaper for thirty years, indulged an interest in local history after retiring in 1907. In 1916, he and his friend William F. Macy published a well-received compilation of local tales and sayings, *The Nantucket Scrap Basket*.<sup>76</sup> Three years later, he was inspired by the spring cart and fire engine he saw in the historical association's

museum to make a model of the long-gone Quaker hearse, hoping to draw a contrast between its crudeness and the beauty of its surviving cousins. Comparing his memories of the vehicle with those of others, he concluded:

*It had two wheels, no springs and [was] made in the form of a dump cart, excepting that the "forebuck" and sides were . . . entirely open, like a hay rack. . . . The wheels were rather large, the spokes flat, and the hubs just plain, straight cylinders of wood, without a lathe tool mark to give any semblance of finish. . . . Are you not glad, my hearers, that this cold, harsh-appearing method of paying farewell to dear ones has been supplanted by methods that are not so apparently heartless . . . ?<sup>77</sup>*



Hussey's model coffin and the stretcher that holds it in the cart.

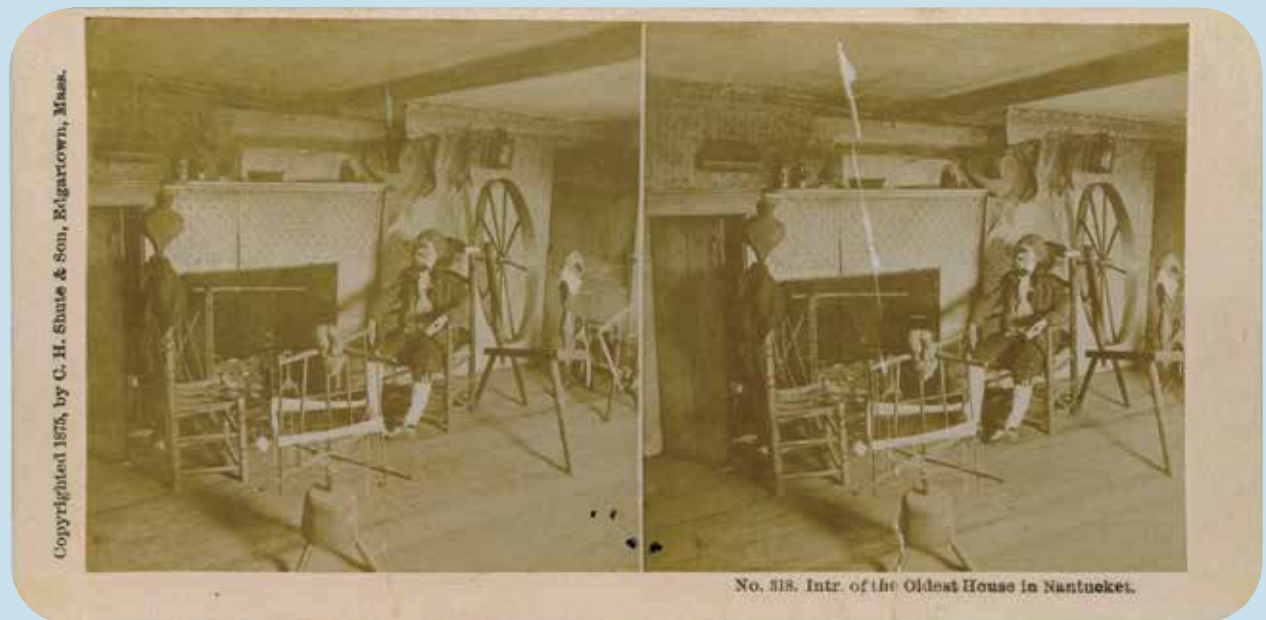
# The Oldest House, 1686

Unknown American builder. Wood, iron, glass, plaster, paint  
Purchase, 1923

The so-called Oldest House, also known as the Jethro Coffin House, is the oldest building on Nantucket still standing on its original site. It is traditionally dated to 1686 and is believed to have been a wedding present for its first occupants, Jethro and Mary (Gardner) Coffin. Like all buildings on the island then and now, it was built substantially from materials shipped from the mainland. The Coffins and their children inhabited the house for twenty years before moving away, and weaver and whaler Nathaniel Paddack bought it in 1708. It remained in the Paddack family for 131 years.

By 1867, it was uninhabited, having become inconvenient to live in by modern standards. The Turner family, which owned

it, opened it to sightseers for the first time in summer 1875, attracting about seven hundred visitors, more than called on the home of Frederick Parker, "the hermit of Quidnet," but only half as many as visited the museum at the Atheneum and less than a quarter as many as trekked out to Sankaty Head Lighthouse.<sup>78</sup> Coffin family descendants purchased the house in 1881 to preserve it and began to open it regularly as a museum in 1897. The historical association bought the house in 1923, and, in 1927, partnered with the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities in a major restoration led by preservationist William Sumner Appleton and architect Alfred F. Shurrocks. The building was restored again following severe damage from lighting in 1987.<sup>79</sup>



One of the bedrooms in the Oldest House furnished with antiques, 1875, by C. H. Shute & Son (SG6420). The earliest displays for tourists at the Oldest House mixed furniture and clothing from different centuries.



Photograph by Eileen Powers, 2007.





## *Mary Gardner Coffin, ca. 1720*

Attributed to the Pollard Limner (active ca. 1690–1730). Oil on canvas, 29¾ x 25 in.

Gift of Eunice Coffin Gardner Brooks, 1924 (1924.3.1)

This is the earliest known painted portrait of a Nantucketer; it is also the earliest painting in the historical association's collection. Like the few other paintings of island people known from the eighteenth century, it was not painted on Nantucket. The island during this period was isolated and rural with an economy too small to nourish its own fine-art traditions. Even as the island's trade expanded internationally from mid-century on, the increasing cultural dominance of the Society of Friends limited the development of a taste for the arts in all their forms, and those citizens of means who sought finer things had to seek them in mainland cities or in Europe.

Mary Gardner (1670–1767) and her husband Jethro Coffin (1663–1726) were part of the second generation of English settlers on Nantucket. Her father and Jethro's grandfather are said to have built them the house now called the Oldest House as a wedding present in 1686. The Coffins lived in the house until 1708, when Jethro inherited property in Mendon, Massachusetts, and they moved away. After his death in 1726, Mary returned to the island. It is during her years on the mainland that Mary is believed to have traveled to Boston to sit for this portrait. The name of the artist remains unknown, but stylistic similarities between this canvas and a handful of others have led to the attribution of the picture to the artist known by scholars as the Pollard Limner.<sup>80</sup>

## Genealogical record books, 1860s–1910s

Eliza Barney (1802–89) and Eliza Burgess (1856–1910). Ink on paper, 13¼ x 8½ x 1½ in.

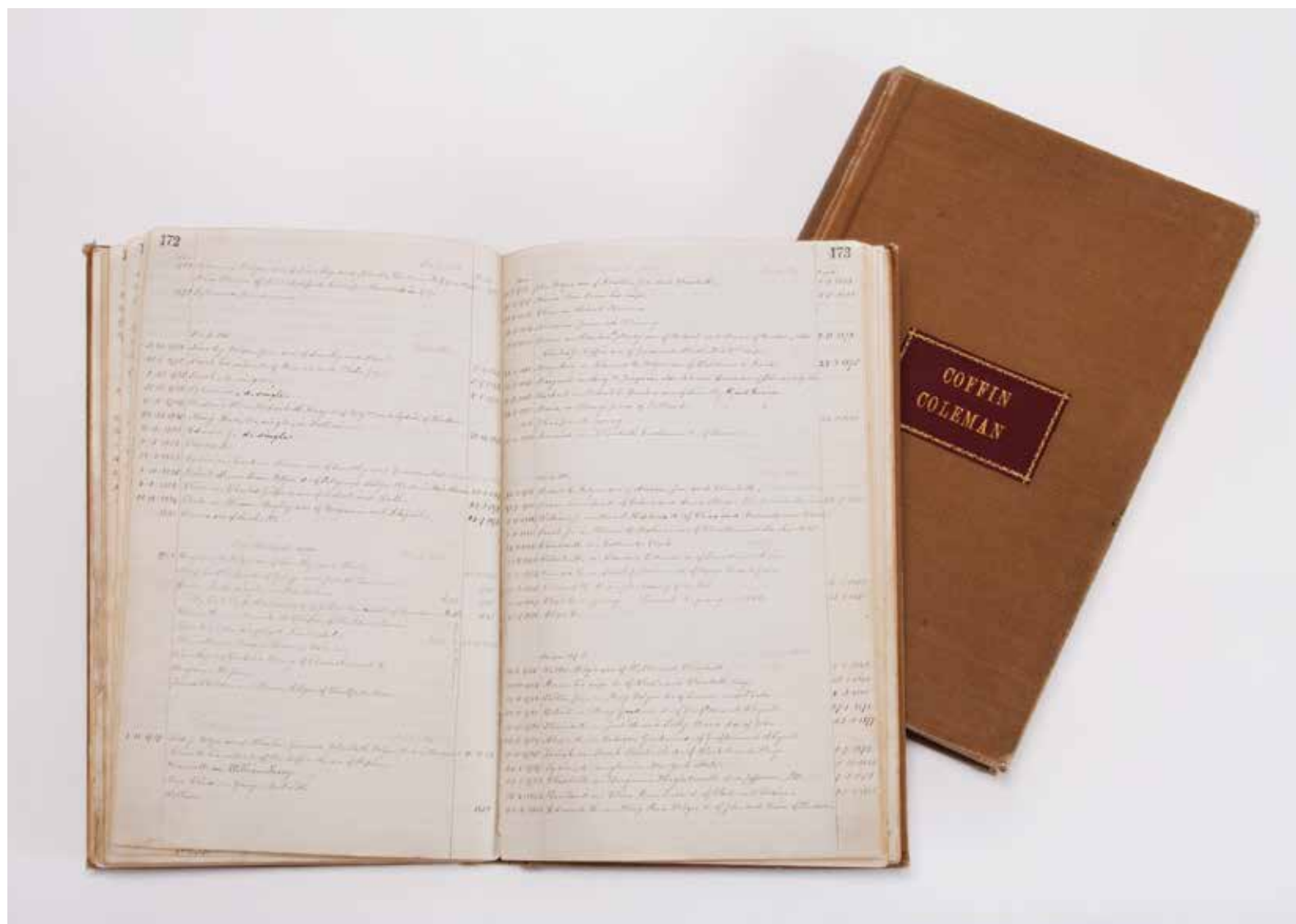
Gift of Eunice S. Barney Swain, 1924 (Ms. 186)

Over two decades late in her life, Eliza Barney (1802–89) filled ledger after ledger with genealogical data covering 1,700 Nantucket families and more than 40,000 people who lived on island between the 1660s and the 1880s. Working from documents and research collected over many decades by her friend, the fisherman and 'Sconset hermit Benjamin Franklin Folger (1777–1859), Barney compiled birth, death, and marriage dates, documented kinship connections, and noted tantalizing details such as "D[ied] of Smallpox at Gravel Island" (Brown Chase, 1714–71), "He was lost at sea on his way to London" (Tristram Allen, 1744–67), "She died in the Asylum" (Deborah Perry Dayton, 1791–1861), and "Moved to California" (James Athearn Folger, 1835–89). Her genealogy, with additions made by her granddaughter, Eliza (Barney) Burgess (1856–1910), into the 1910s, is a remarkable achievement that island researchers have turned to for generations.

Eliza was one of the children of Sally Gardner (1773–1842) and Joseph Starbuck (1774–1861), one of the island's wealthiest Quaker shipowners and oil merchants. Eliza had strong interests in botany, entomology, literature, and history, and, with her husband Nathaniel Barney (1792–1869), was one of the island's leading proponents of abolition and women's suffrage. Despite this activism, Barney's genealogical record excludes all Nantucket residents of color except one: Patience Cooper (1810–85), an African American woman wrongly convicted of murder in 1862, whom Eliza Burgess added to the record in 1885. The full genealogy was laboriously transcribed into a database by a team of volunteers between 1995 and 1997 and is available today online.



Eliza Barney, ca. 1875, by Josiah Freeman (1840–1902) (P111).







## Hat block, 1856

Atlantic Straw Works, Nantucket. Plaster, 6½ x 12¾ x 13½ in.  
Gift of Thomas H. Giffin, 1926 (1987.52.4e)

Those Nantucketers who did not leave the island during the economic decline that accompanied the end of whaling sought to encourage new commercial ventures to bring employment and prosperity back to the island. The Atlantic Straw Works, established in 1853 to make hats and bonnets, was one of these ventures. Led by businessmen from Foxborough, Massachusetts—a center of straw-goods manufacturing—the firm converted a disused Friends meeting house on Main Street into its factory. By mid 1855, the works employed 237 women and two men and had made 147,000 items in the preceding twelve months. This made it the second-largest employer on island, behind the whale fishery but ahead of fishing, farming, and candlemaking.<sup>81</sup>

Young Mary H. Riddell (1840–1906) was one of the operatives at the factory. Like approximately one-fifth of the factory's employees, she worked from home. This hat block is one of a number of plaster forms she was given to use in completing hats and bonnets. After lengths of braided straw were sewn together into the proper shape, the material was treated with a stiffening paste and ironed on the block to make its shape permanent. Mary kept the hat blocks when the factory closed in 1866. Under her married name of Nye, she ran a dry- and fancy-goods shop on Centre Street for some years.



Mary H. Nye, 1882 (GPN886).

## Lever press, 1847

Unknown Nantucket maker. Wood, about 18 x 31 x 7 ft.

Purchase, 1929

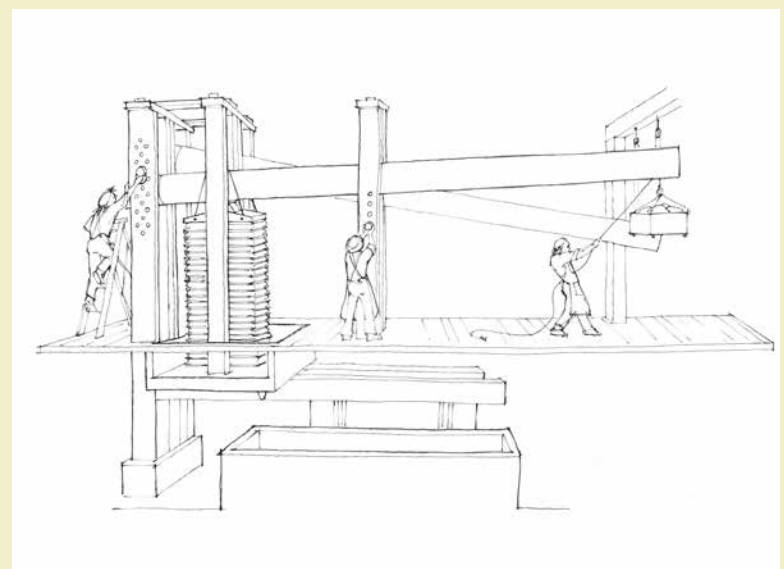
Nantucket came to specialize in hunting sperm whales in the third quarter of the eighteenth century in order to supply the candlemakers of Colonial America. Merchant William Rotch built the island's first candleworks in 1772, and local factories continued to make high-value spermaceti candles until the end of island whaling in the 1860s.

The candle house of Richard Mitchell & Son on Broad Street was destroyed by the Great Fire of 1846. A brick replacement building, now known as the Hadwen & Barney Candle Factory and the heart of the Nantucket Whaling Museum, was completed the following year. Among its equipment were two enormous double-lever presses, one of which survives. It is probably the last surviving whale-oil press in the United States.

Sperm-oil refining was a seasonal process, involving the repeated heating, chilling, pressing, and straining of raw oil.

The finest and most lucrative grade of oil came from the first pressing, which was done in winter. The U.S. government purchased most of this oil for use in lighthouses. Leftover raw oil was processed again in spring and summer to create lesser grades of oil for a variety of lighting and industrial purposes and to separate out pure spermaceti wax, the main ingredient in bright, clean-burning spermaceti candles.<sup>82</sup>

The lever press operated very simply. The weighted upper beam pressed down on a stack of duck bags filled with congealed oil; the pressure forced liquid oil through the fabric of the bags, leaving thicker, lower-quality material behind. Because this candle house was used as a warehouse, office building, and shop after its time as a factory, a number of pieces of the press are missing, including the center guide posts and a frame for block and tackle at one end.



The lever press loaded with bags ready for pressing.  
Illustration by Mark Foster.





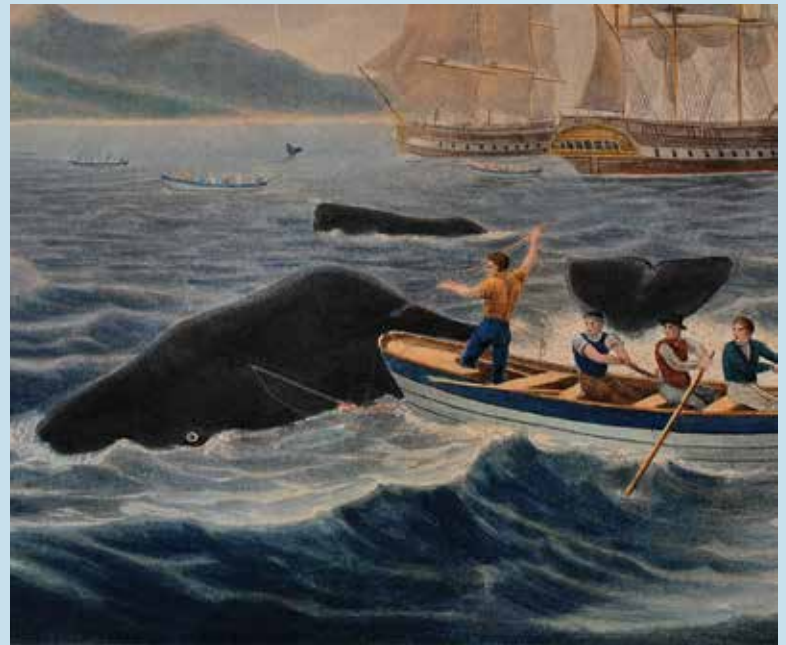


## Harpoon, nineteenth century

George Swain Jr. (1791–1880). Wrought iron, about 22 x 13 in.  
Gift of the New Bedford Whaling Museum, 1930 (1992.160.1)

The wrought-iron shanks of the harpoons whalers used to catch whales were made to be malleable, in order to catch better in a whale's flesh and to prevent the harpoon from snapping as the animal moved to escape. After a successful hunt, bent irons were recovered and straightened for reuse by the ship's blacksmith, although occasionally a twisted iron was retained as a souvenir. This iron is a typical double-flued example, commonly employed on American whaleships before 1850. It is not certain whether the loop bent into its

middle is the result of use at sea or a demonstration of the iron's malleability carried out on land. Either way, the initials "GS" stamped on the head indicate it was made by blacksmith George Swain Jr. (1791–1880), who maintained a smithy on New North Wharf (now Steamboat Wharf) for more than fifty years, making whalecraft and shoeing horses. In 1815, he made a single whaling voyage on the ship *Winslow* of New Bedford under Captain Edward Gardner. He married Phebe Starbuck in 1821; a quilt she made appears on page 172.<sup>83</sup>



*A Shoal of Sperm Whale. Off the Island of Hawaii* (detail), 1838, by J. Hill after Thomas Birch and Cornelius B. Hulsart. Aquatint, 16 x 24 in. Gift of the Friends of the Nantucket Historical Association, 1994 (1994.32.1).

## "A Journal of a Whaling Voyage in the Ship *Edward Cary* of Nantucket Perry Winslow Master to the Pacific Ocean," 1854–58

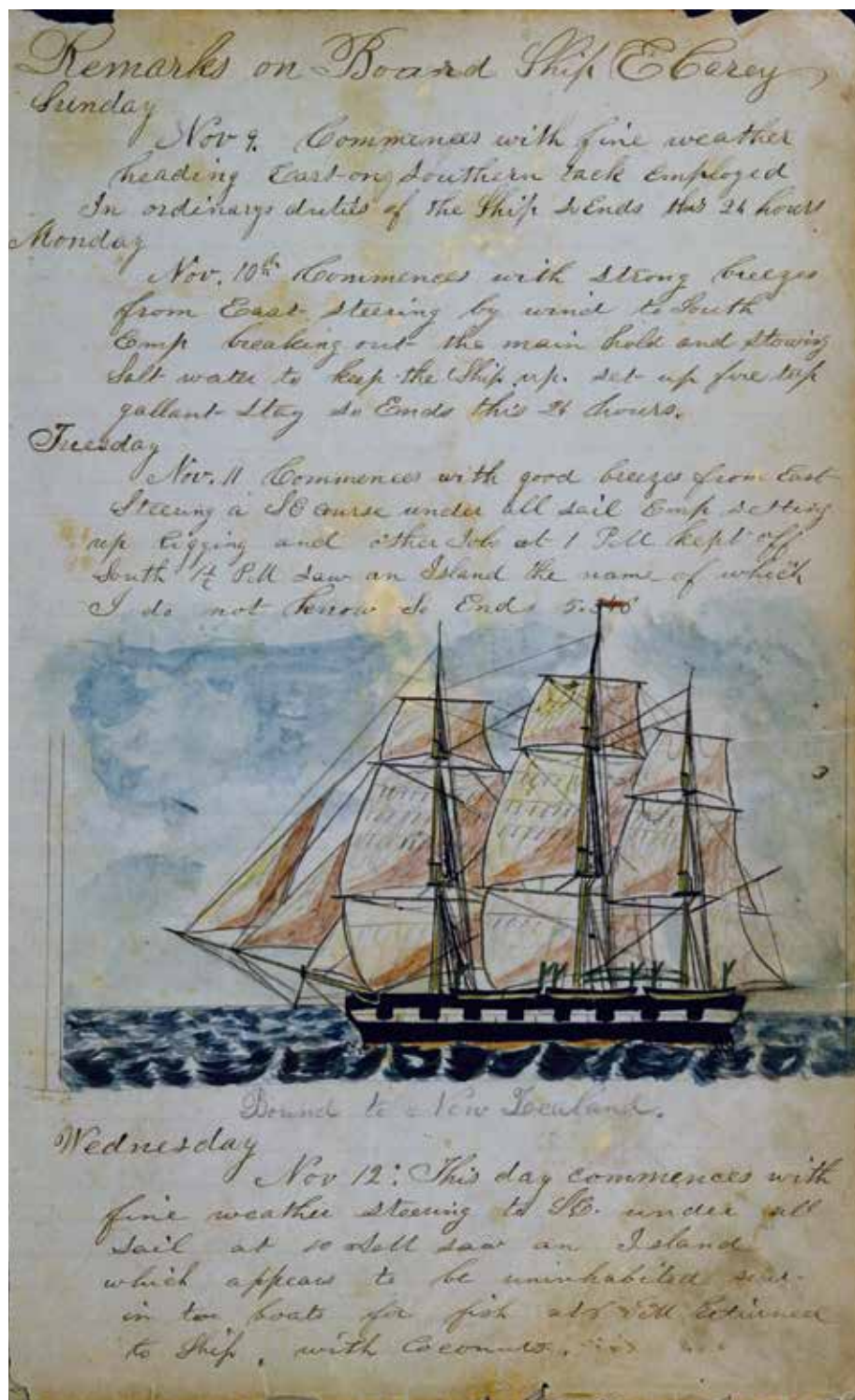
Joseph E. Ray (1833–60). Ink and watercolor on paper, 12¼ x 8¼ x 1 in.  
Gift of Andrew B. Coon, 1930 (Ms. 220, log 73)

Twenty-year-old Joseph E. Ray (1833–60) kept this journal during the four years he was boatsteerer on the Nantucket whaler *Edward Cary*, illustrating the book with three dozen lively watercolors of ships, islands, and hunting scenes. The voyage was a typical one, sailing first to the Azores and the Cape Verde Islands for provisions and extra crewmen before passing through the South Atlantic and around Cape Horn into the South Pacific to cruise for whales. By the time the ship returned home, the crew had caught thirty-five whales for 1,235 barrels of oil, some of which the captain shipped home mid-voyage in the *Daniel Webster*.

The crew numbered thirty at first, with seven more recruited along the way. "[A]ll of us home sick as the devil," Ray recorded just three months out, and near the two-year mark the steward, the cook, and three other seamen deserted at the Bay of Islands, New Zealand. Captain Perry Winslow lessened the trials of long separation by traveling with his wife, Mary Ann, and the couple welcomed a daughter seven months out.





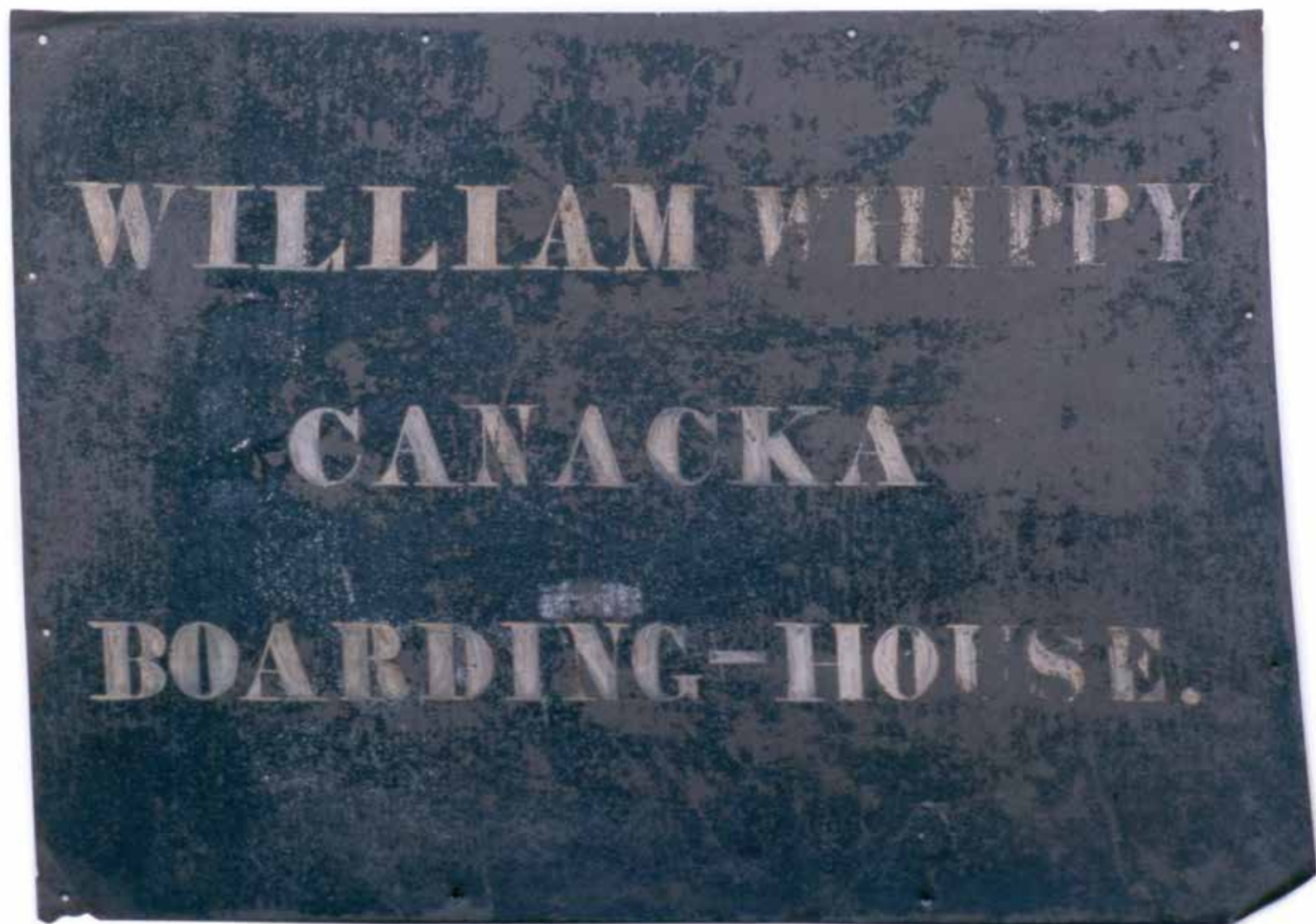


The ship spoke 114 other vessels during the voyage, exchanging news and letters with fifteen Nantucket whalers and sixty-six from New Bedford and adjacent towns.

Life aboard was hard, and Ray complained that "six days shalt thou labor on the 7 break thy back in several places." But he and his shipmates also celebrated holidays, carved scrimshaw, and collected pets—Ray notes three dogs, a goldfinch, and two parakeets on board at various times.

In 1860, Ray and a friend headed to San Francisco as crew in the clipper *Meteor*. Rounding Cape Horn, Ray fell from aloft and died. His burial at sea is recorded in a letter by Herman Melville, a passenger on the voyage, which was under the command of Melville's brother Thomas.<sup>84</sup>





## Boarding house sign, 1840s

Unknown Nantucket maker. Painted sheet metal, 12½ x 17 in.  
Gift of Mary E. Long, ca. 1930 (1992.212.1)

The need for labor aboard Nantucket whalers drew men from across the globe. Although a majority hailed from New England, thousands from Canada, Europe, the Atlantic Islands, and the Pacific worked aboard the island's ships. Returning vessels brought many of these men to Nantucket, where some settled but most stayed only long enough to secure a berth on an outward-bound vessel. William Whippy (1801–47) was himself a sailor and a foreign transplant to the island, having been born in New Zealand. In 1837, he married Maria Ross, sister to a mariner and a daughter of African-born James Ross, who came to the island to escape slavery. Her sister Eunice was the focus of efforts to integrate the island schools in the 1840s. William and Maria ran a sailor's boarding house for Pacific Islanders in the predominantly black New Guinea neighborhood near Mill Hill. This is the sign from their establishment, which uses the common sailor's name for Pacific Islanders—*Canackas* or, more typically, *Kanakas*, from the Hawaiian word for person.<sup>85</sup>

## Receipt book, 1766–1814

Captain Hezekiah Bunker (1737–1820). Ink on paper bound in leather, 4 $\frac{1}{8}$  x 6 $\frac{1}{2}$  in.

Gift of Harry B. Turner, 1932 (AB 110)

Nantucket-born Hezekiah Bunker (1737–1820) was a merchant captain and trader. For forty-eight years, he recorded expenditures from his life afloat and ashore in this leather-bound receipt book, beginning when he was twenty-nine years old. The earliest entries document sailors' wages and vessel repairs on trading voyages to Italy and various Canadian ports in the brig *Industry*. These transactions are valuable for the rare light they shine on the ordinary sailors aboard an eighteenth-century Nantucket vessel—Murtha Dullechan, Joel Leonard, and Fortunatus Bassett appear on the pages shown here (top).

Captain Bunker was one of the earliest settlers of Yarmouth County, Nova Scotia, where he first went in 1765. The entries

in the receipt book provide glimpses of Bunker establishing a life in Canada—contracting for the construction of a stone wall for his property, purchasing food, and delivering window glass for a new meeting house, as well as releasing young Thomas Saxon from his indenture and lending money to one Henry Coggin (bottom).<sup>86</sup>

Captain Bunker sat out the American Revolution in coastal Yarmouth. His return to Nantucket in the 1790s is reflected in entries settling the estate of one of his brothers, acting as a tax collector, and transacting business on behalf of various Nantucket vessels.







Schooner **Hernace**,\* of New Bedford.  
Sailed March 19, 1849.

1st Mate—James McGuire  
Passenger—Rev. Joseph Brown.

\*Arrived at San Francisco, November 13, 1849.

Brig **G. B. Lamar**,\* of Valparaiso (formerly of Boston).  
Sailed March 11, 1849.

Captain—Tristram Finkham.

\*Arrived at San Francisco, May 1, 1849.

ISTHUS ROUTE.

Schooner **Splendid**, of New York.

Sailed March 12, 1849.

1st Mate—Charles B. Chadwick.\*

\*Arrived at San Francisco, August 31, 1849.

Ship **Henry Astor**,\* of Nantucket.

Sailed March 12, 1849.

Captain—George F. Joy      2d Mate—Obed F. Fosdick  
1st Mate—Alex. H. Coffin      3d Mate—John G. Chase

Seamen.

Timothy Hinckley  
Alexander C. Fuller  
Daniel Blunden  
Samuel King  
Edward M. Bartlett  
John M. Bartlett  
Reuben P. Eldridge  
Benj. F. Ray  
Benj. F. Ray, 2d  
Charles H. Gibbs  
Shubert Barnard, Jr.  
Wm. T. Hight  
Gideon Worth  
Edward A. Swain  
Samuel Woodward  
George P. Bunker, 2d  
Alex. J. Mender

Charles A. Taber  
George G. Nixon  
Wm. R. Starbuck  
Allen H. Hinckley  
George Winslow  
Isiah Gorham  
Edward H. Bennett  
Thomas J. Cathcart  
Charles S. Bunker  
Charles A. Granger  
John A. Hooley  
Robert Sylvester  
Sylvester D. Blount  
James F. Chase, 2d  
Wm. son C. Holmes  
Isaac P. Hinckley  
Wm. W. Allen

\*Arrived at San Francisco, September 15, 1849.

Stephen Luce  
Wm. S. Arthur  
Wm. S. Barnard  
Simoon L. Coffin

Charles B. Myrick  
Joseph Brown  
Reed Gatchell

Cook—Paul Warren; Steward—Charles I. Groves  
Physician—Isaac Thompson.

Passengers.

Edward P. Coffin  
Andrew Gardner  
Henry P. McGlave  
Henry Coleman, M.  
James F. Swain, 2d  
Charles G. Coggeshall  
Josiah Sturtevant  
George F. Alley

Alexander M. Myrick  
Seth Folger  
Traugott B. M. Richter  
Nathan P. Cartland  
George W. Lewis  
Frederick H. Mitchell  
George G. Mitchell

ISTHUS ROUTE.

Brig **Dr. Hitchcock**, of New York.

Sailed March 16, 1849.

Passengers\*—Charles B. Macy, Rowland H. Macy  
\*Arrived at San Francisco, July 23, 1849.

Ship **York**,\* of Boston.

Sailed April 1, 1849.

Passengers—William Barrett, Ferdinand C. Ewer  
\*Arrived at San Francisco, September 17, 1849.

Ship **Mayflower**,\* of New Bedford.

Sailed April 1, 1849.

Seamen—Jonathan Mender, Thomas B. Mender  
\*Arrived at San Francisco September 15, 1849.

Bark **Golinda**, of New York.

Sailed April 1, 1849.

Captain—Paul B. Macy; 1st Mate—Edward W. Coffin  
Seaman—Christopher C. Coffin.

## *A List of Persons from Nantucket now in California, or on Their Way Thither, 1850*

Jethro C. Brock, Nantucket. Ink on paper, 4 $\frac{1}{8}$  x 2 $\frac{3}{4}$  in.

Donor and donation date uncertain (Rare Book NAN 974.497 B78)

More than 650 Nantucketers traveled to California between October 1848 and December 1849 to seek their fortunes in the Gold Rush, and uncounted others followed in the years after. This tiny book lists those first Nantucket Argonauts, most of whom traveled direct from Nantucket, buying shares in one of the joint-stock companies that were set up to purchase or charter ships and procure equipment for the adventure. The ship *Henry Astor*, recently returned from a four-year whaling voyage, carried the members of the Astor Mining Company (listed here as *Seamen*) as well as the members of the Sherburne Mining Company (listed as *Passengers*), plus a few unaffiliated passengers. The *Henry Astor* was the second ship to depart Nantucket for California and took 188 days to get there sailing via Cape Horn.<sup>87</sup>

*The List of Persons . . . on Their Way Thither* names many Nantucketers who started their journeys from other ports, particularly sailors who were already overseas. Brothers Charles B. (1812–56) and Rowland H. Macy (1822–77) decided they could reach California faster if they traveled via the Isthmus of Panama. This required them to go first to New York, where they booked passage to Chagres in the brig *Dr. Hitchcock*. Once in Panama, they crossed overland to Panama City and caught a steamer to the Golden Gate—a journey of 134 days altogether. Within a year of arriving in California, the brothers had established a dry-goods store in Marysville, an experience that informed R. H. Macy's later and better-known department-store venture in New York City.<sup>88</sup>



*Whaleship Henry Astor*, 1830s, by an unknown Chinese artist.  
Oil on canvas, 20 $\frac{1}{4}$  x 25 $\frac{3}{8}$  in. Purchase, 1905 (1905.59.1).

## Octant, ca. 1830

John H. Wheeler, New York, N.Y. Wood, brass, ivory, 14 x 11¼ x 3 in.

Gift of Ezra T. Farnham, 1942 (1992.349.2)

The forty-four-ton fishing schooner *Mary and Emma* was the smallest vessel to sail around Cape Horn to California during the Gold Rush. Captain David G. Patterson (1812–89) and six crewmen made the passage in 150 days, departing Nantucket December 6, 1849, and arriving in San Francisco May 5, 1850. Captain Patterson is believed to have carried this octant, also called a Hadley quadrant, on the voyage. He would have used it to measure the positions of celestial bodies above the horizon as part of determining the schooner's position. Although less accurate than sextants, octants were also less expensive and remained in wide use in the mid-nineteenth century.

The schooner's company comprised Captain Patterson; his brother William Patterson, mate; Reuben Manter, navigator; John Bearse, Davis Hall, and Amos Ryder, seamen; and Alexander Holmes, cook. Holmes is described as "colored" in period sources, but, being from Mashpee on Cape Cod, he may have been Native American or of mixed ancestry.<sup>89</sup>

The *Mary and Emma* was built in New London, Connecticut, in 1848 and was employed in the mackerel fishery out of Nantucket. Captain Patterson originally planned to sail to California via the Strait of Magellan, but the insurers for the voyage objected, having recently heard of the loss of two New London-built schooners in the strait. Patterson took the more exposed Cape Horn route instead. Despite heavy seas at the Cape, crewman Davis Hall later recalled that the *Mary and Emma* rode the waves "as easy as a goney" [albatross]. Captain Patterson noted that they suffered "not a spar broken, or a rope stranded, or a sail split" during the whole passage, although they did have to skip dinner one stormy day. Hall remembers Alexander Holmes saying to the captain, "You can't have any dinner today, as she's rolled the duff overboard."<sup>90</sup>

After delivering the *Mary and Emma* Mining Company to California, the vessel made trading voyages to the Sandwich Islands. Its later history is unknown.







# Projectile points

Unknown Wampanoag makers. Stone mounted to card, 10¾ x 13¾ in.

Gift of Alice and Alfred Shurrocks, 1940 (1940.1)

The native Wampanoag people lived on Nantucket for thousands of years. The stone tools they used bear witness to a thriving population that often numbered in the thousands. They fished the waters of the sound and the island's ponds, hunted birds and what mammals there were, and, eventually, farmed as well as the sandy soils allowed. The people moved around the island seasonally, living closer to the ocean in summer and retreating to more protected areas in winter.

The projectile points on this sheet are part of a collection of one thousand Native artifacts collected by botanist Alice Albertson Shurrocks (1880–1967) and her husband, the architect Alfred F. Shurrocks (1870–1945). Alice's passion for botany and ornithology led her on long walks to every corner of the island, where she began collecting the Wampanoag points she found on the ground. She and Alfred, whom she married in 1929, devoted large amounts of free time

to arrowhead hunting, or "Indianing," as they called it. They kept journals of their walks and made a detailed catalog of their finds, noting types and conditions, as well as places and dates of discovery. Their friends gave them additional pieces. Almost everything they collected they found on the surface; they were not trained archaeologists and did almost no digging.<sup>91</sup>

When they donated their collection to the historical association in 1940, it contained thirty-eight assorted stone tools and 962 points, which the Shurrockses laboriously glued and tied onto cards for display. The scope of their collection demonstrates the range of indigenous activity on the island prior to English settlement; as Alice wrote, their finds were "gathered from all parts of the island—among beach pebbles along the Harbor shores; inland near springs and ponds; in plowed fields and rutted roads."<sup>92</sup>

## Astronomical clock, 1790

Walter Folger Jr. (1765–1849), clockmaker; Cornelius Allen (1767–1835), cabinetmaker. Brass, silver, wood, 101 x 23 x 12 in.

Gift of Annie Alden Folger in memory of John B. Folger, 1942 (1943.18.4)

Walter Folger Jr. (1765–1849) was the island's foremost polymath in the first half of the nineteenth century. He was renowned as a self-taught mathematician, astronomer, and clock and instrument maker, although he worked as a lawyer and served a term in Congress. His most famous work is this astronomical clock, built over a two-year period and completed when he was twenty-five. The clock is designed to tell the minutes and hours of the day; the day of the month; the year; the motion and declination of the sun; the motion, phases, and declination of the moon; and the progression of the sun through the zodiac. Although often said to tell the time of high tide, the clock does not do this except insofar as local tides can be roughly extrapolated from the positions of the moon and sun.

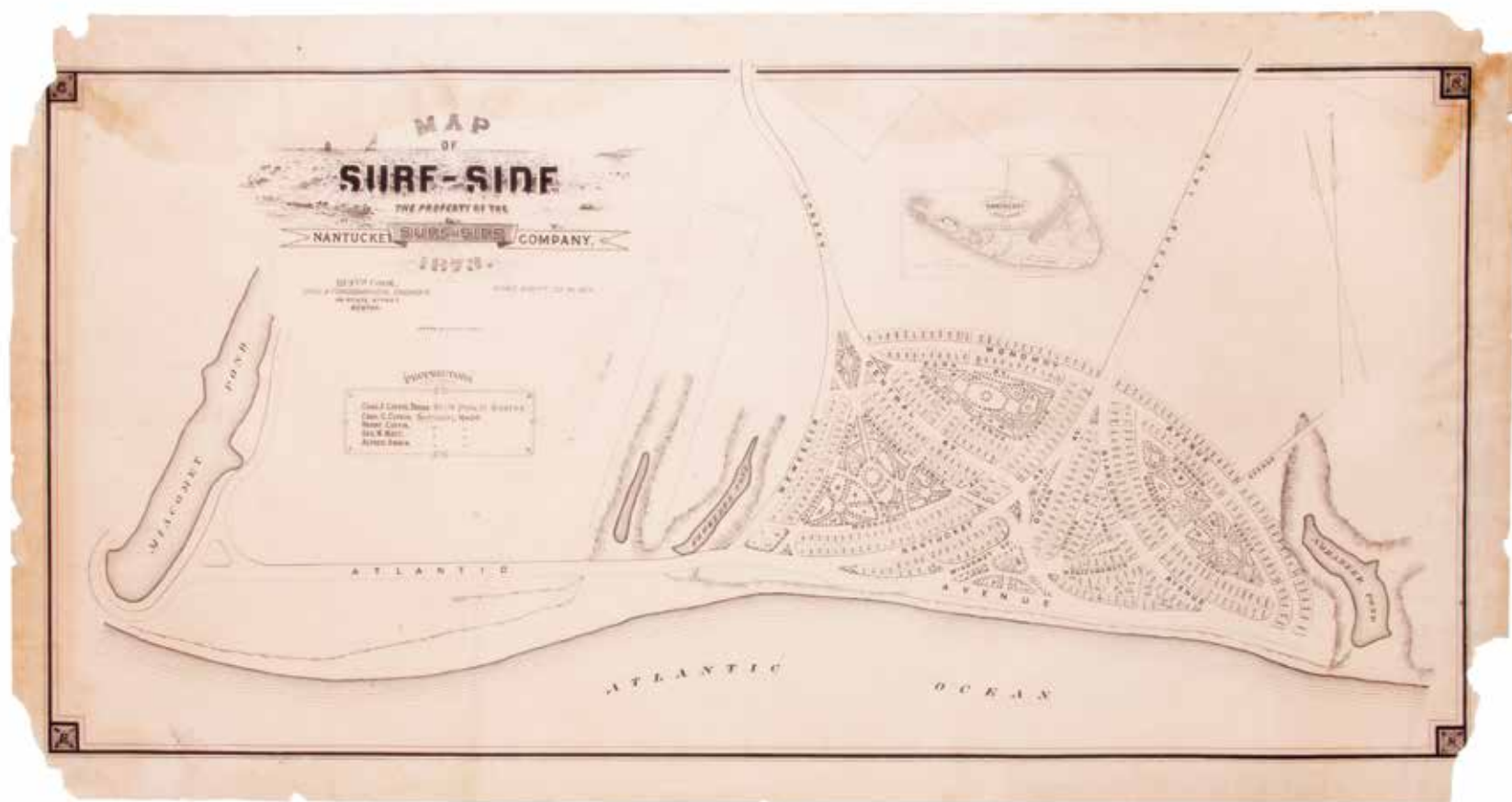
The time and strike mechanism is typical of the period and may be by another American maker. To it Folger added fifteen wheels and twelve pinions to create the complications for solar and lunar motion and the year. A gilt disc representing the sun travels once a day around the innermost curved slot in the clock face. Metal shutters alter the length of the slot in correspondence with seasonal variations in the length of the day. They also indicate solar declination and house of the zodiac. A half-silver, half-black rotating ball representing the moon passes through the outer slot in the clock face every 24 hours, 50.527 minutes. Another set of shutters adjusts for moonrise and -set and declination. The clock's lunar complications are Folger's signal achievement and make the clock one of the most important timepieces from early Republican America.<sup>93</sup>











## *Map of Surf-Side. The Property of the Nantucket Surf-Side Company, 1873*

Rufus Cook, Boston, Mass., civil engineer; W. R. Fish, Boston, Mass., delineator. Ink on paper, 19<sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 38<sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in.

Gift of Robert M. Waggaman, 1952 (Ms. 1000-5-3-11)

Increased interest in attracting summer visitors led to a spate of land development schemes along Nantucket's shores in the early 1870s. Among these was a venture by the Nantucket Surf-Side Land Company, established in 1873 by the former whaling merchants Charles G. and Henry Coffin, George W. Macy, Alfred Swain, and Charles Frederick Coffin of Boston (Henry's son), with the assistance of investors from New York. The company hired civil engineer Rufus Cook to design the fashionable plan shown here; its contemporary design vocabulary of curving streets and formal parkland flows straight from Frederick Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux's influential 1869 plan for Riverside, Illinois. Just like Robert Morris Copeland's recent design for Oak Bluffs on Martha's Vineyard, Surfside was modern and new—contrived to appeal to investors seeking a place to build a summer cottage.<sup>94</sup>

Beautiful on paper, Cook's plan was never realized on the ground. Containing just 480 lots, it attracted no construction and was replaced in 1881 by a simpler grid plan that allowed for more than 12,000 tiny building lots and accommodated the right-of-way of the new Nantucket Railroad—itsself a scheme by many of the same investors to encourage development at Surfside. The Surfside railroad station, which doubled as the Surfside Land Company sales office, was the only building on the property until the Surfside Hotel opened in 1883. Fewer than thirty people purchased lots in the subdivision between 1873 and 1882, and no cottages were built. Although a failure, Surfside demonstrates islanders' eagerness to embrace speculative land development as an economic engine for Nantucket, an engine that has proven spectacularly successful in the long run.<sup>95</sup>

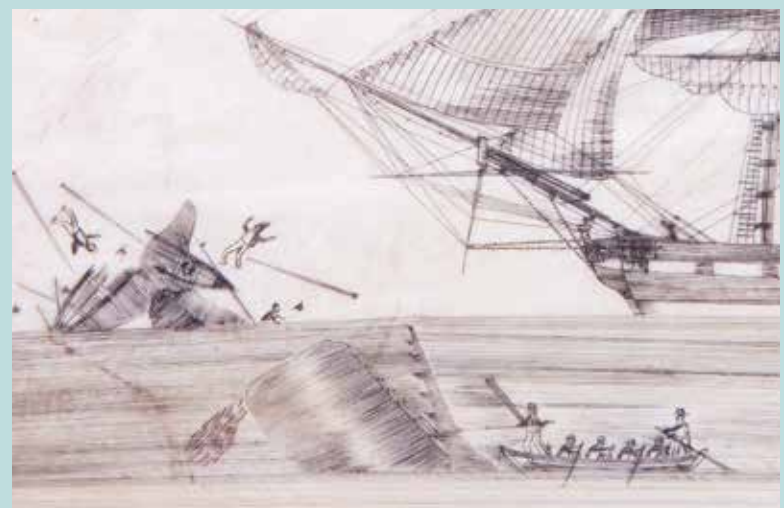
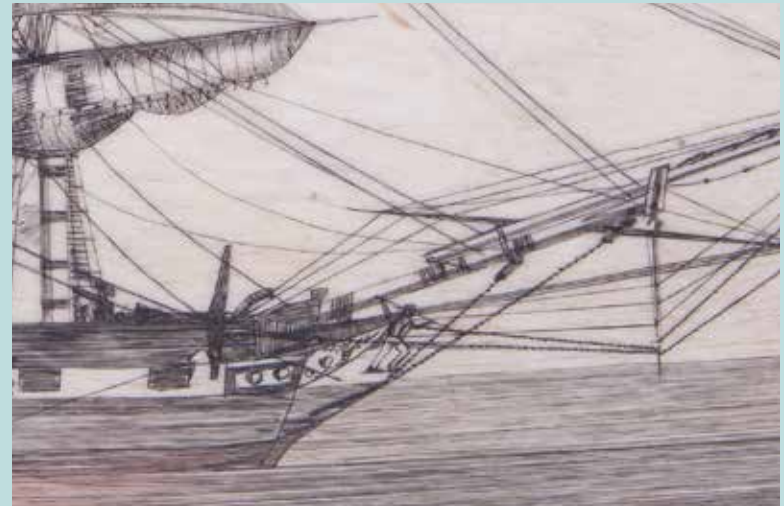


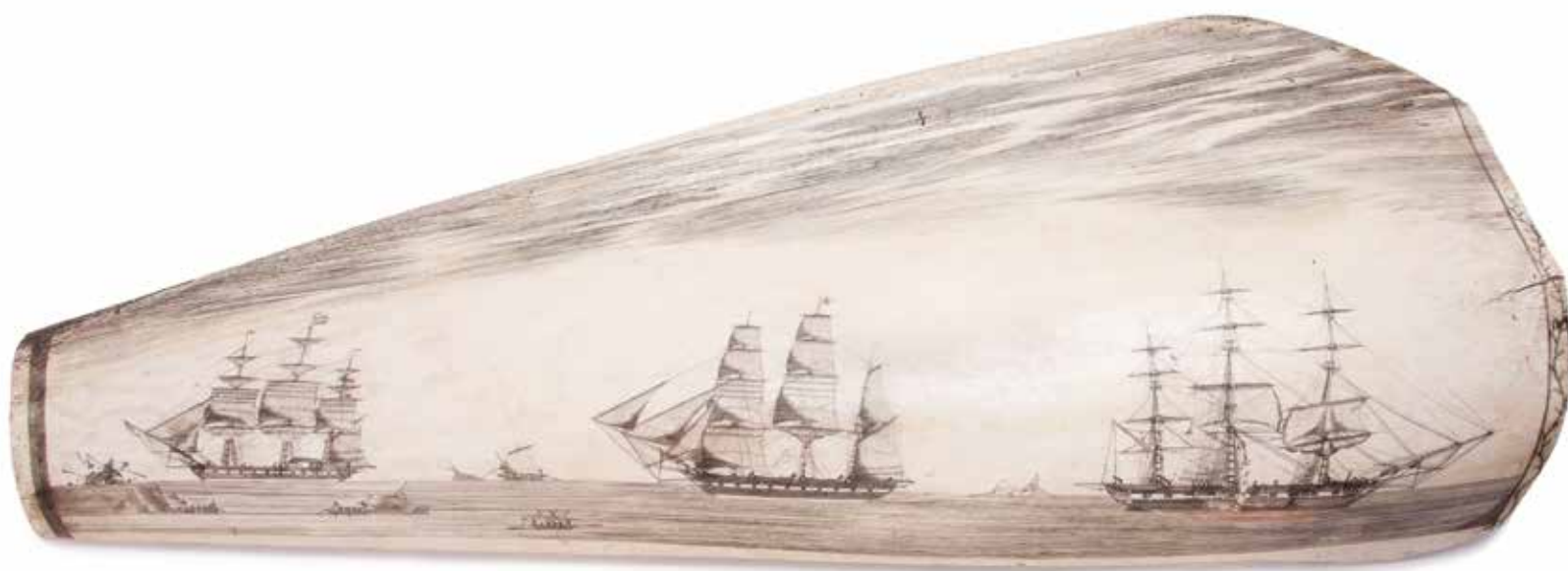
## Engraved panbone, ca. 1830

Unknown English artist. Whale panbone and ink, 39 $\frac{5}{8}$  x 14 $\frac{1}{2}$  x 6 in.

Acquired in trade from David Gray, 1955 (1956.3.1)

This decorative engraving is both the finest example of pictorial scrimshaw in the collection and one of the largest and finest scrimshawed panbone scenes known from the nineteenth century. Made from the rear section, or pan, of a sperm-whale mandible, it was carefully and knowledgeably engraved by an unknown artist to depict a range of whaling activities on the high seas. A bark arrives on the scene in the center of the composition, while whales spout and dive nearby. The ship on the left has five whaleboats in the water. A whale smashes one with its tail, propelling men and equipment into the air. Men in the other boats hunt with harpoons and lances. The boat in the foreground prepares to tow its catch to the ship—the dead whale waived by a small flag for ready identification should it become separated from the boat. The ship at right, its sails aback to arrest its way, cuts in a whale. With long spades, crewmen cut the blubber from the carcass while one of the cutting-tackles hoists a blanket piece aloft. A stain of red spreads out across the water, the only spot of color in the entire composition. Details of the scene include telltales at the mastheads for gauging wind direction and a boatsteerer figurehead, with harpoon ready to dart.









## Napkin rings, ca. 1855–58

Unknown American artist. Whale ivory, each 1 to 1¾ in. dia.  
Gift of Helen Hussey Ludolph, 1956 (1956.16.1a–.1l)

Eliza McCleave (1811–95) opened a private museum in her home on Main Street in 1842, displaying local curiosities she gathered and foreign items her husband, Captain Robert McCleave (1809–78), brought home from his whaling voyages (see page 62). Among the items that came to hold pride of place in her collection were these spectacular decorative napkin rings. Carved with great creativity and skill, they display a profusion of flowers and vines, and each has a central scene: a house in the woods, a fountain, an eagle, a hunter and two mythical green men. Originally there were twenty-four rings, and they formed a set with eleven coordinating knives and spoons of various kinds, all carved from sperm-whale ivory.<sup>96</sup>

The lot are the work of a sailor aboard the 1854–58 voyage of the whaleship *Oliver Crocker* of New Bedford, which

Captain McCleave commanded. Eliza, in an inventory of her museum, refers to the artist as “a youth of 18 years of age . . . a natural carver, ingenious every way, and highly educated.” “My Husband took a fancy to him he was so smart,” she wrote. “He did this carving at intervals, when it was his watch below, [and] had to use such tools as he could get and what my Husband had with him.” She says he “belonged to one of the first of families near Boston” and shipped under a pseudonym to escape the consequences of some previous “fast” behavior. “He did not follow the Seas after this one voyage.” She knew his pseudonym, she admitted, but did not disclose it. “I think he has been at my Museum. I’ve talked with him, laid the work to him . . . I think he likes to keep his history in youth a secret.”<sup>97</sup>



The interior of Eliza McCleave's museum, ca. 1890, with the napkin rings and related carvings displayed on the table. Eliza McCleave examines a spoon at right. Gift of William H. and Kay Barney, 2012 (PH90-17-1).

## Bowl from HMS *Bounty*, eighteenth century

Unknown Chinese maker. Porcelain, 4 x 9¼ in.

Gift of Margaret Folger, 1956 (1956.36.1)

In February 1808, the Boston sealer *Topaz*, commanded by Captain Mayhew Folger of Nantucket, stopped at Pitcairn Island in the remote Pacific and accidentally discovered what had become of the perpetrators of the infamous mutiny aboard HMS *Bounty*.<sup>98</sup>

In 1789, Fletcher Christian led a mutiny aboard the Royal Navy transport *Bounty* and cast Captain William Bligh and his loyal crewmen into an open boat in the Pacific. The mutineers escaped to Pitcairn Island, where they formed a settlement with men and women they had brought from Tahiti. The ship was burned to prevent escape and lessen the chances they would be discovered. By 1800, only mutineer John Adams and the Tahitian women and their children survived,

everyone else having died or been murdered. They lived on the island undetected until Folger and the *Topaz* arrived eight years later.<sup>99</sup>

Captain Folger received this Chinese export porcelain bowl from Adams—then living under the pseudonym Alexander Smith—during the visit. It likely belonged to one of *Bounty*'s officers, perhaps even Captain Bligh himself. Folger also received *Bounty*'s valuable chronometer from Adams, but he lost it when the *Topaz* was seized by Spanish authorities later in the voyage. The bowl returned to Nantucket with Folger, however, where it descended in his family before coming to the historical association.<sup>100</sup>



*The Mutineers turning Lieut. Bligh and part of the Officers and Crew adrift from His Majesty's Ship the Bounty*, 1790, by Robert Dodd (1748–1816). Etching, 18½ x 25 in. Found in collection (1992.391.1).







## Poster for Rockwell's New York Circus, 1847

Unknown American artist. Ink on paper, 36 x 25½ in.

Found in collection, 1956 (1956.42.1)

In November 1847, Rockwell's New York Circus set sail on the brig *Young Lady*, bound to Boston from Sydney, Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia. After fourteen days of storms and contrary winds, they ran short of food and water for themselves and their show horses, and Captain Knox brought the vessel into Nantucket. To make the most of the unscheduled stop, the circus performers applied to the town selectmen for permission to perform and pitched their tent at the corner of Broad and Water streets for four days only, with tickets at 12½ cents and 25 cents.<sup>101</sup>

They took out a notice in one of the local papers, promising "rich Gymnastic and Equestrian Entertainment." How many islanders attended their shows is unknown, but some clearly stayed away. "Many persons have expressed in strong language," the *Weekly Mirror* reported, "their hopes that the Circus (accidentally thrown upon our shores) would not be

licensed. Those persons honestly look upon such exhibitions as highly demoralizing, of no benefit to any one, and fruitful of much evil." And yet, the paper editorialized, how could locals decry a circus but not speak out against "evils of far greater magnitude" in the community?

*If the Circus remained here the entire year, it would be incapable of accomplishing a tenth part of the actual and positive evil which one rumseller inflicts upon this community. . . . An evening at the Circus never caused a husband to abuse, aye, murder his wife and children . . . . A single rumseller is, in every particular, of vastly greater injury to any community, than a hundred circus companies.*<sup>102</sup>



Advertisement from the *Nantucket Inquirer*, November 17, 1847.



## Whaleship model, ca. 1765

William Meader (1750–1829). Painted wood, metal, linen, 21 x 27 x 12 in.  
Bequest of Margaret H. Crosby, 1963 (1989.89.1)

Nantucket whaling developed in stages. The English settlers, hiring predominantly Wampanoag crews, started shore whaling in small boats around 1690. Longer trips “over the horizon” began around 1715, growing to two- and three-month cruises as far as Newfoundland waters around 1730 and to four- and five-month cruises to the Azores and West Indies in the 1760s. Nantucket ships made voyages of up to a year to the Guinean and Brazilian coasts on the eve of the American Revolution, but only in 1791 did a Nantucket whaler cross for the first time into the Pacific Ocean.<sup>103</sup>

Tradition holds that this model represents a Nantucket whaling ship of about 1765, approximately halfway between the beginning and the end of the island’s whaling days. It was built by Nantucket-born William Meader (1750–1829), who would have been fifteen at the time, near the beginning of his own career at sea. Everett U. Crosby, a leading Nantucket historian and civic leader in the second quarter of the twentieth century, purchased the model at a New York gallery in 1940. Its existing rig was in poor condition and not considered to be original to the model, so Crosby hired island model makers Charles Sayle Sr. and Nikita Carpenko to rerig and restore the model in the spring of 1941.



Charles Sayle Sr. in his workshop, 1940s.  
Gift of Constance Indio, 2002 (P21649).







## Bonnet, 1840s

Unknown maker. Silk, buckram, paper, 8¾ x 6¼ x 10¼ in.

Gift of Mrs. Henry Hallam Saunderson, 1964 (1964.28.1)

This poke bonnet belonged to Phebe (Folger) Coleman (1771–1857), multitalented poet, diarist, artist, farmer, and mill owner of Nantucket and upstate New York. One of ten children born to Walter and Elizabeth Folger, she was particularly close to her older brother, Walter Folger Jr., from whom she learned mathematics and navigation (see page 98). She later taught these subjects to her mariner husband, Samuel Coleman (1773–1825), whom she married in 1798. She taught school for a time while he followed the sea and filled a commonplace book that she titled *Un Recueil* ("A Collection") with, in her words, "Painting, Penmanship, Algebra and Pieces selected from various authors in Prose and Verse, with a few Pieces in French and their Translation." In 1809, she and Samuel moved to Hudson, New York, to

take up farming near his relatives. They later owned a grist mill and saw mill at Ghent, New York, which she continued to manage after his death.<sup>104</sup>

The bonnet's simple style marks it as Quaker headwear, and its distinctively pleated crown tells us its owner followed the orthodox Wilburite sect. It is made of tan twill-weave silk with cream-colored silk ribbon ties. The crown is formed with buckram, and the large brim is lined with silk supported by paper. In a small concession to ornament, there is more cream-silk ribbon in a bow just above the bavolet, or neck flounce, at the back. A bonnet like this would always have been worn over a cap, and an oilskin or quilted cover would have been added over it in rain or cold.<sup>105</sup>



Phebe Coleman, ca. 1850 (C79).

## Eliza F. Codd's spectacles, ca. 1900

Unknown maker. Glass lenses in plastic frames,  $1\frac{7}{8} \times 4\frac{7}{8} \times 5\frac{5}{8}$  in.  
Gift of George Jones, 1969 (1969.6.3)

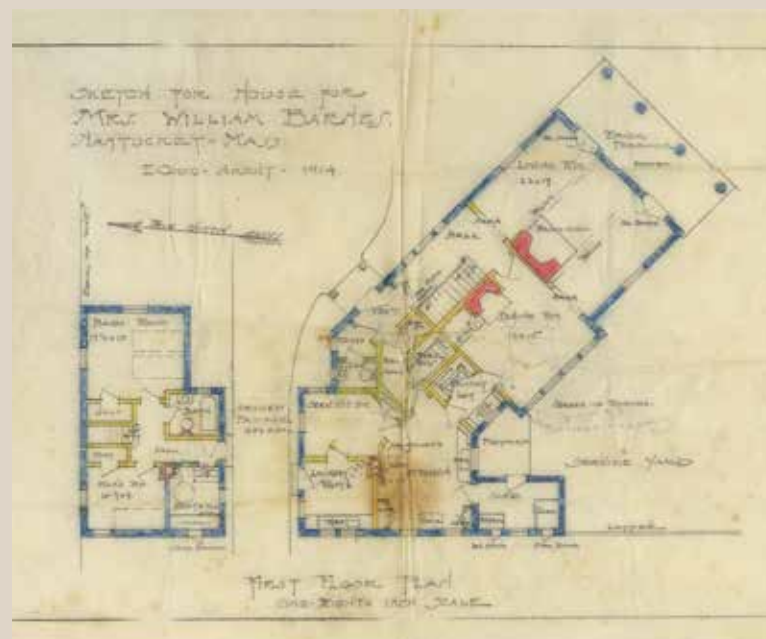
Eliza F. Codd (1882–1920), architect, was the daughter of William F. Codd, an engineer and surveyor, and Emma Louise Allen. As a child, she assisted her father in his surveying work for the Wannacomet Water Company. She attended Nantucket's Coffin School, the Priscilla Braislin School for Girls in Bordentown, New Jersey, and, starting in 1900, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, where she studied architecture under Francis Ward Chandler, Constant-Désiré Despradelle, and Guy Lowell. She graduated in 1904, winning the Rotch Prize for the highest scholarship in the department. Afterwards, Codd worked as a draftsman for fellow alumna Lois Lilley Howe, founder of the first woman-owned architectural firm in Boston—and only the second such firm in the United States.

In 1911, Codd opened her own practice on Nantucket and soon established a reputation as the island's leading designer: "From her busy atelier comes much of the best work of recent years," wrote a correspondent for the *American Architect*.<sup>106</sup> She is best known for her renovations of historic buildings and Colonial Revival designs for affluent seasonal residents, such as the William Wallace house on South Beach Street (1915), the W. S. Keith residence on Cliff Road (1916–17), and the Leeds Mitchell house at Brant Point (addition, 1919).

Actively interested in the island's welfare, Codd served on the board of trustees of the Nantucket Cottage Hospital and organized Red Cross operations on island during World War I. She also went overseas to teach architectural drafting to American servicemen. She returned to Nantucket and continued her work until her unexpectedly early death in 1920. She was so highly esteemed that members of the island's building trades made up her funeral cortege and created a memorial fund at the hospital to honor her legacy.<sup>107</sup> MJK



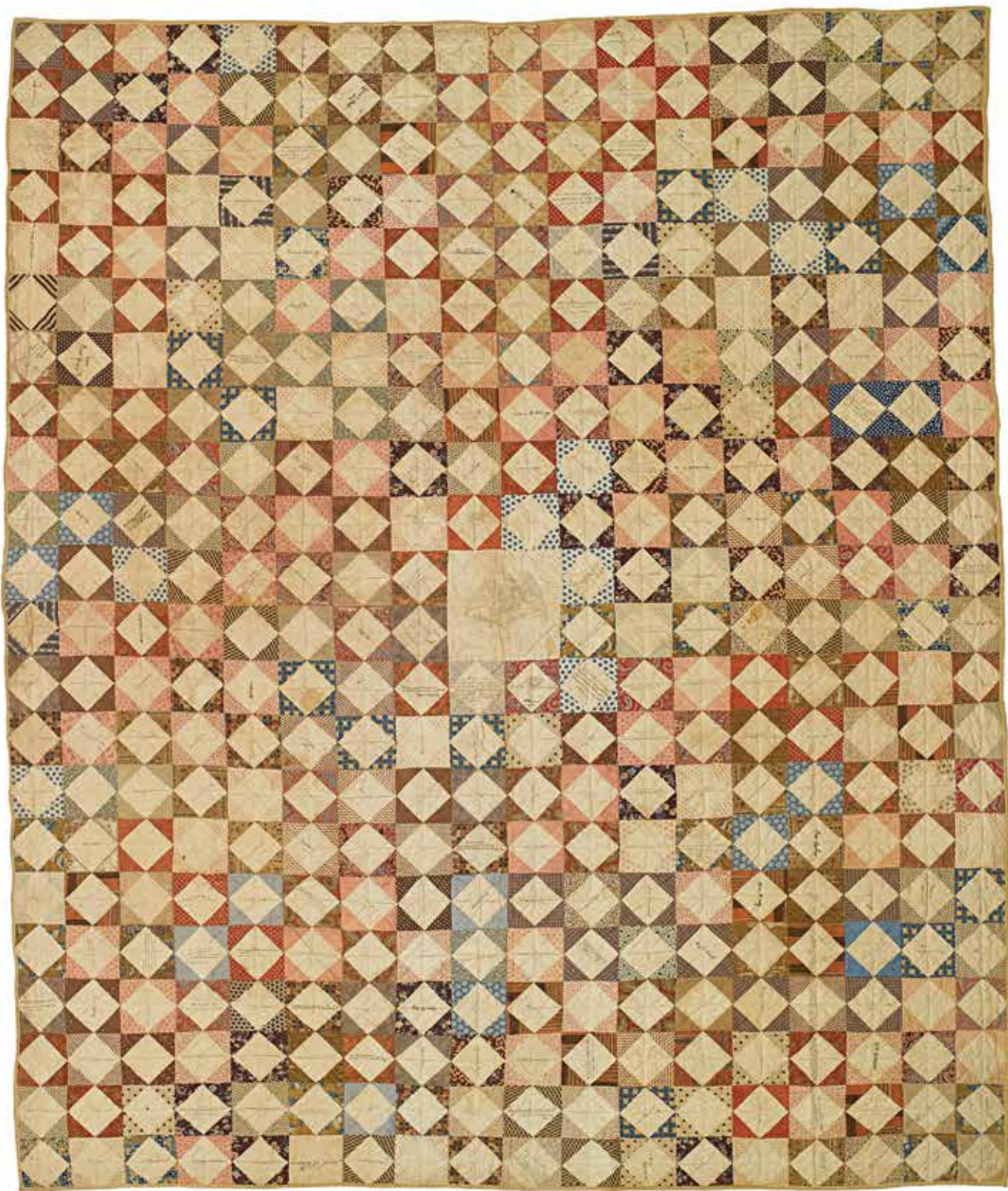
Eliza F. Codd, ca. 1915. Gift of Boothbay Regional Historical Society, 2007 (P21900).



House for Mrs. William Barnes, Gardner Court, Nantucket, first-floor plan, 1914, by Eliza F. Codd. Graphite and colored pencil on trace,  $11 \times 15\frac{1}{2}$  in. Gift of Hilliard Wood, 2013 (MS2000, no. 87).









## Album quilt, 1856

Lucy Mitchell (1812–75) and others. Ink on dyed and printed cottons, 95 x 78 in.

Gift of Charles Clark Coffin in memory of Charles Frederick Coffin, 1970 (1993.239.1)

Agricultural activity on Nantucket increased in the mid-nineteenth century as islanders sought economic activities to replace the moribund whaling industry. Following the example of communities across the country and encouraged by state financial support, Edward W. Gardner and others founded the Nantucket Agricultural Society in 1856 to promote farming and the mechanical arts, principally through an annual fair at which premiums were awarded for the best produce, animals, handicrafts, and manufactured goods submitted in various categories.<sup>108</sup>

Lucy Mitchell (1812–75) organized the creation of this large patchwork quilt to celebrate the society's first fair, which was held across three days in late October 1856. Members of the society banded together to make the piece, decorating three quarters of the quilt's 393 blocks with signatures, illustrations, and sayings on agricultural and moral themes. Lucy herself contributed the large center panel with its patriotic eagle and

shield.<sup>109</sup> The quilt was specifically called out in a song by fifteen-year-old Margaret Getchell that was performed at the fair:

*Here's GARDNER with his plenteous horn  
In Album Quilt displayed,  
With colored squares and stitches fine,  
That ladies fair have made;  
With MRS. MITCHELL'S eagle proud  
In centre-piece outspread,  
And MRS. FOSDICK'S model plough  
With not a line mislaid.<sup>110</sup>*

Album quilts of this kind were sometimes made to raise money. This one may have been among the items auctioned at the end of the fair's first day. It passed into the hands of Charles Frederick Coffin (1835–1919), whose name and "1856" are written on the back.<sup>111</sup>

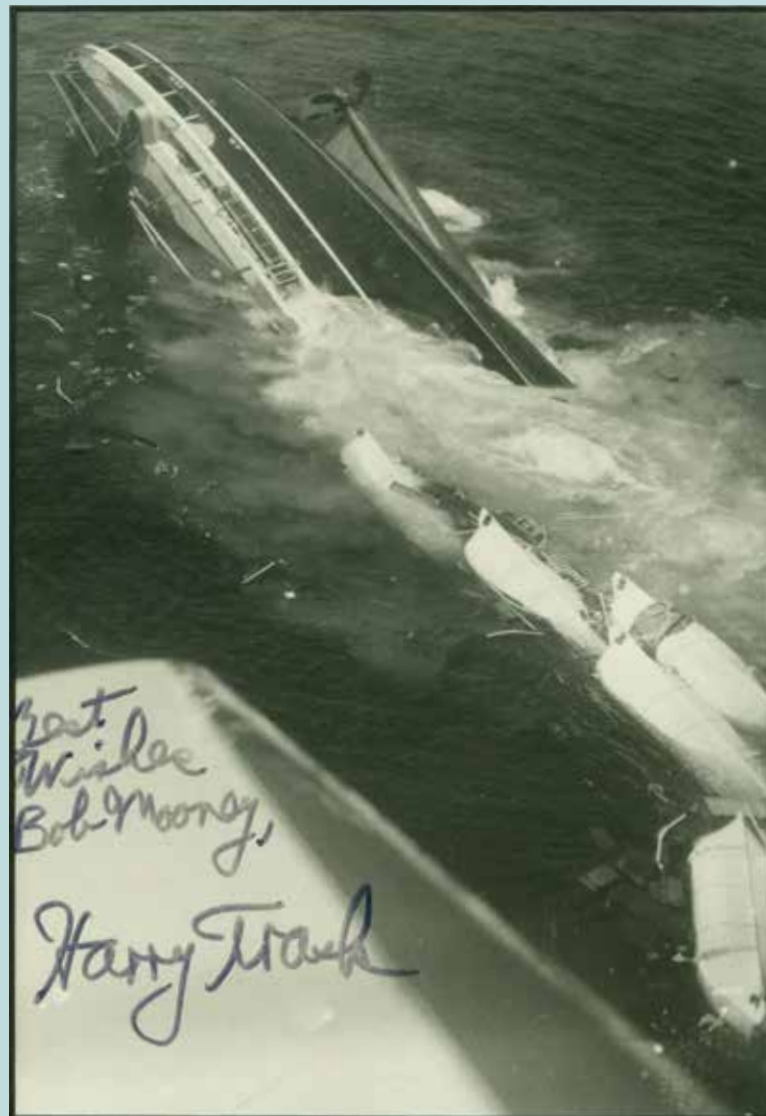


## Wall panel from the *Andrea Doria*, 1952

Giò Ponti (1891–1979), designer; Enrico Monti di Milano, fabricator. Painted fiberboard on wood frame, 79 x 27 x 1¾ in.  
Gift of Alfred Lowden, 1970 (1970.9.1)

On the night of July 25, 1956, the Swedish passenger liner *Stockholm* collided with the Italian liner *Andrea Doria* in fog forty-five nautical miles south of Nantucket. The *Doria*, flagship of the Italian Line and a showpiece of modern design, heeled over and slowly sank over the next eleven hours. Forty-eight people died in the immediate event, and four others died subsequently, but 1,662 passengers and crew were saved from the stricken Italian ship in one of the century's most dramatic peacetime rescues. Four crewmen from the *Stockholm* and a fatally injured girl from the *Doria* were airlifted to Nantucket for emergency treatment, and photographer Harry Trask took his Pulitzer Prize-winning photos of the doomed ship's last minutes from a plane he chartered on island.<sup>112</sup>

This piece of paneling washed up on Nantucket's south shore after the disaster. It is from the so-called "Zodiac Suite," one of *Andrea Doria*'s finest accommodations. Painted with figures representing the constellations, including Ophiuchus, Serpens, and Virgo, it formed part of the aft bulkhead in the suite's sitting room. The two slotted metal plates in the center held a lost wall decoration. Marion W. Boyer, a Standard Oil Company executive, and his wife, Malcolm, were traveling in this suite and escaped being killed by Malcolm's desire for a last, late cup of coffee and a cigarette. *Life* magazine reported how Mr. Boyer rushed below after the collision: "The corridor outside his cabin was a mass of debris, but he worked his way to the door, threw it open, and saw only the open ocean. The whole outside wall had caved out."<sup>113</sup>



Final moments of the *Andrea Doria*, 1956, by Harry Trask.  
Gift of Robert Mooney, 2012 (P22517).







## Sampler, ca. 1800–10

Lydia Coffin (life dates uncertain). Silk on linen, 18½ x 14¼ in.  
Gift of Robert M. Waggaman, 1971 (1971.62.7)

As a needlewoman, Lydia Coffin was clearly talented and well trained. Her exceptional craftsmanship is brilliantly displayed in this fancy sampler, with its balanced composition, sophisticated coloring, and finely executed stitching. Unfortunately, so many Lydia Coffins lived on Nantucket at the turn of the nineteenth century that it is difficult to know which one she was, and the sampler provides no information to narrow the field.

The piece is worked with silk threads on a thirty-two-count open plain-weave linen. The composition, stitched both over one and over two threads, comprises three panels defined by arcaded carnation borders. In the top panel, trees and flower baskets alternate with birds and insects and two small dogs. The middle is defined by three complex flower arrangements with butterflies. The bottom is filled with more flowers and trees. The verse reads:

*Plain as this Sampler was, as plain we find,  
Unletter'd unadorn'd the Female Mind,  
No fine Ideas fill the vacant Soul,  
No graceful Colouring animates the whole.*

*With close attention, carefully inwrought,  
Fair Education prints the pleasing Thought,  
Inserts the curious lines on proper Ground,  
Compleats the Work and scatters Roses round.*

This moralizing text, “carefully inwrought” of the smallest stitches, declares the necessity of education to fill young women’s minds. Nearly a dozen samplers dating between 1795 and 1835 are known that incorporate this verse. The rhyme, including a third verse not employed here, originated in the May 1784 edition of *The Boston Magazine* as one of three poems written by a gentleman in Nova Scotia for his daughters’ samplers.<sup>114</sup>

## *Nantucket Blacksmith (Aquila Cormie), 1950*

Julian E. Yates (1871–1953). Oil on canvas, 20 x 24 in.

Gift of George E. Vigouroux Jr., 1973 (1973.25.2)

Blacksmithing was as vital to Nantucket as it was to other seaport and agricultural communities in early America. Islanders relied on blacksmiths and shipsmiths to make household items, shape architectural hardware, fabricate shipboard ironwork, and—across two centuries of island whaling—to forge the edged tools needed to harvest whales.

This painting depicts blacksmith Aquila Cormie (1880–1961) in his shop on Straight Wharf. By the time the canvas was painted, Cormie’s shop was the last smithy operating on Nantucket. The mainstay of his business had long been shoeing horses, although when the automobile arrived on island in 1918, he was one of the first entrepreneurs to sell tires and gasoline and offer to make car repairs. The island’s fishing fleet gave him lots of work, too, as demonstrated by the three shellfish-dredge frames visible in the picture.

Two pairs of andirons speak to the decorative ironwork he was commissioned to make for new residents of the island’s old homes.

Cormie first came to Nantucket from New Brunswick to work on a farm, but landed a job working for blacksmith Clinton Parker in 1900. Except for 1932–37 when he returned to New Brunswick, Cormie maintained a smithy at one of three locations on Nantucket’s waterfront from 1910 to 1955.<sup>115</sup>

Artist Julian E. Yates (1871–1953) was a Baptist minister who served thirty-three years as a chaplain in the U.S. Army. After retiring in 1935, he split his time between Washington, D.C., and Nantucket, where he devoted his free hours to painting. For nearly twenty years, he was an active member of the Nantucket art community, known for “his carefully conceived and executed oils of Nantucket scenes.”<sup>116</sup>



Aquila Cormie’s blacksmith shop on Straight Wharf, 1944, by Lawrence Miller (P8434).







## *View of the Town of Nantucket, ca. 1811*

Thomas Birch (1779–1851). Oil on canvas, 17¼ x 27 in.

Gift of Robert M. Waggaman in memory of Floyd Pierpont and Jean Mackenzie Waggaman, 1974 (1974.21.1)

The island's reliance on the water forms the theme of Thomas Birch's *View of the Town of Nantucket*, the earliest known painting of the town. Maritime activity fills the scene, with men launching a boat from the beach at Shimmo in the foreground, an inbound ship and an outbound sloop in the middle distance, and assorted vessels lining the wharfs and crossing the sound in the background. Great Point and Brant Point lighthouses mark the approaches to the island.

English-born painter Thomas Birch (1779–1851) lived most of his life in Philadelphia. This is one of his earliest surviving canvases. He is not known to have visited Nantucket, so scholars generally think he based this painting on a sketch by fellow Philadelphian Joseph Sansom (1767–1826), which is

known through an engraving by Benjamin Tanner published in 1811. Sansom, in an article illustrated by the Tanner engraving, describes the scene:

*It is pleasantly situated upon a gentle slope, on the south-west side of the harbour, surmounted by a row of windmills, and flanked, to the right and left, by extensive ropewalks. There is generally 15 or 20 sail of square rigged vessels in port, with twice or three times that number of coasters, presenting a lively scene, as you enter from the sea; the stores and houses, which are built of timber, being mostly painted red, or white, [are] crowned by the steeples, or rather towers, of two presbyterian [sic, congregational] meeting houses.<sup>117</sup>*



*The Town of Sherburne in the Island of Nantucket, from Port Folio* (Philadelphia, 1811), by Benjamin Tanner (1745–1848) after Joseph Sansom (1767–1826). Gift of Robert W. Waggaman, 1975 (1975.82.63).



## Tablecloth from House of Lords, 'Sconset, 1897–1906

Attributed to Anna, Frances, and Esther Nevins. Cotton and silk, 31 x 31½ in.

Gift of Jean and James Brown Jr. and Ellen Halsey, 1976 (1976.53.1)

House of Lords, on Broadway in 'Sconset, was originally a small fisherman's cottage, so-called because "in it for years the fishermen met at night during the season and swapped lies in reference to their experience on shipboard."<sup>118</sup> In the 1880s, Mrs. A. H. Nelson of Philadelphia enlarged it for use as a summer house, and by 1896 her regular visitors included her friends from home, Samuel and Nannie Nevins and their daughters Anna, Frances, and Esther. This tablecloth is signed by guests to the cottage, mostly high-school and college-aged individuals who would have been friends or acquaintances of the daughters. Alongside their names, many of the guests have drawn school insignia, fraternity letters, musical quotations, and pithy sayings, which the

Nevins sisters embroidered over using various colors and thicknesses of silk and cotton thread in stem stitch, backstitch, and satin stitch. Among the sketches are an elf playing golf, cupids, cats, a tiger, and a gravestone inscribed "Here Rests / Robert / A true Friend to all who knew Him." The piece appears to have been worked on over time, and several signatures and drawings are not embroidered or are only partially finished.

Samuel Nevins purchased House of Lords from Mrs. Nelson in 1900. Ten years later, he died in the house during a summer holiday. Nannie Nevins died in 1916, also on Nantucket, but the three daughters continued to visit the cottage into the 1930s.



NOB SKA



## Nameboard from the *Nobska*, 1956

Unknown Steamship Authority maker. Painted wood, 14 x 90 x 1½ in.

Gift of the Woods Hole, Martha's Vineyard, and Nantucket Steamship Authority, 1976 (1976.86.4)

The steam ferry *Nobska* was built at Bath, Maine, in 1924–25 for the New England Steamship Company's island service connecting Woods Hole, Oak Bluffs, and Nantucket. The ship carried passengers, cars, and freight to the islands for forty-nine years, becoming a beloved island fixture for locals and visitors alike. For the twenty-eight years from 1928 to 1956, the ship operated under the name *Nantucket*, but the construction of a new *Nantucket* in 1956 led to the return of the *Nobska* name and to the carving of new nameboards for installation atop the vessel's wheelhouse.

The ship was withdrawn from commercial service in 1973. On October 1, 1974, summer resident Stephen Townsend stole this nameboard, the starboard one, from the laid-up vessel, two nights after fleeing the dock after an unsuccessful attempt to

steal the port nameboard. Police recovered the board from the attic of Townsend's mother's house on Lily Street the next summer, by which time the *Nobska* had been sold and towed away to Baltimore to become a floating restaurant.<sup>119</sup>

The nonprofit Friends of the *Nobska* (later the New England Steamship Foundation) purchased the ship in 1988 and made efforts to restore it. In 1996, the foundation drydocked the *Nobska* at the Charlestown Navy Yard for an ambitious hull restoration, but the effort stalled from lack of funds. The National Park Service, needing the dock to maintain other historic vessels, seized the *Nobska* for back payments in 2004 and, unable to float the ship out of the dock, was forced to have it demolished in 2006.<sup>120</sup>

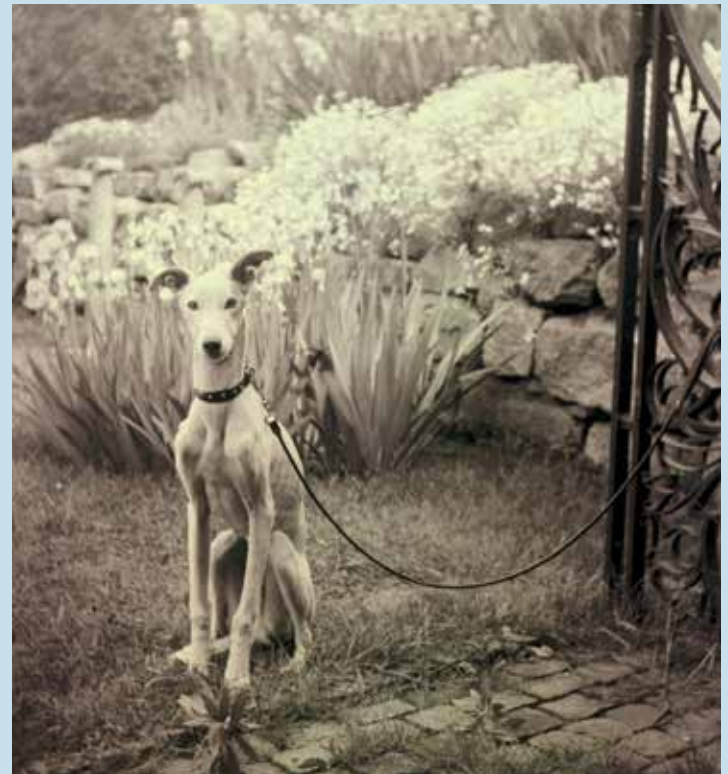


*Nobska* rounds Brant Point, crowded with departing summer visitors, 1960s, by John W. McCalley (1916–83).  
Gift of Adrienne McCalley, 1996 (P17682).

## Settee, ca. 1943

Unknown Italian maker; Gertrude Monaghan (1887–1962), designer; Anna Monaghan (1856–1943) and Hanna Monaghan (1889–1972), makers. Wood, canvas, wool, 36 x 70 x 29 in.  
Bequest of Hanna D. Monaghan, 1972 (1997.101.1)

Sisters Hanna and Gertrude Monaghan from Philadelphia began summering on Nantucket in 1923, attracted by the island's small art colony. In 1929, they purchased an eighteenth-century livestock barn off Main Street that they converted into a summer home and studio named Greater Light, after the sun. (They named their other cottages, next door and across the lane, Lesser Light and North Star, for the moon and the stars.) They filled Greater Light with eclectic furniture, art, and textiles, including this seventeenth-century Italian settee, which they re-covered with elaborate canvas-work panels depicting the Monaghan family's favorite island spots. Gertrude designed the panels for her mother, Anna, to embroider. After Anna died, Hanna finished the work, and the settee became a centerpiece in the home. The seat shows scenes of the moors, the sandy shore, and the waters where the family sailed. The back depicts the family at Pocomo Head and in the garden at Greater Light. In the center, parents Anna and James Monaghan appear in their wedding apparel, with a cupid overhead and the sisters' beloved greyhound napping beneath. Hanna later wrote that the weave of the needlepoint canvas made the stitched stripes on her father's trousers too wide. "I would never have married a man," she quoted her mother saying, "with such wide striped trousers."<sup>121</sup>



The Monaghans' beloved greyhound in their garden at Greater Light, 1930s, by Hanna or Gertrude Monaghan (PH37-N8).



The studio at Greater Light, 1986, by Terry Pomett (P9803).







## Friendship basket purse, 1950

José Formoso Reyes (1902–80), weaver; Charles Sayle Sr. (1908–94), carver. Cane and wood, 5½ x 8 x 5 in.  
Gift of Mary E. Reyes, 1983 (1983.9.1)

José Formoso Reyes (1902–80) revolutionized the form and meaning of Nantucket baskets during the three-and-a-half decades he lived on Nantucket. A native of the Philippines, Reyes earned his Bachelor of Arts at Reed College in Portland, Oregon, and his Master of Education at Harvard University. He taught at the Philippine Military Academy in the late 1930s before serving in World War II. After the war, he and his wife, Mary Elizabeth “Betty” Ham (1908–88), and their children moved to Nantucket, where her mother had a summer home. Unable to find work as a teacher, he turned to basket weaving, supplementing his existing knowledge and skill with lessons in local basket techniques from Mitchell Ray.<sup>122</sup>

Reyes experimented with shapes, lids, and the addition of ornamental carvings, soon developing the “Friendship

basket” purse. As historian Frances Karttunen has written, his “handbags became first a fad and then an industry involving the whole Reyes family. Waiting lists for custom-made baskets grew from months-long to years-long.” Today, the basket purse is a status symbol, particularly among seasonal residents. The popularity of Reyes’s baskets—he made over five thousand—sparked a basket-making revival on Nantucket that continues unabated.<sup>123</sup>

Reyes made this basket in 1950 as a birthday gift for his wife. The carved sperm whale on the lid is by his friend, the carver and model maker Charlie Sayle, who is credited with first suggesting that Reyes add carvings to the lids of his baskets.



José Reyes weaving a basket in his workshop, 1950s, by Louis S. Davidson (1891–1983). Gift of the photographer, 1975 (P726).

## Design for a shower curtain, ca. 1930

Tony Sarg (1882–1942). Charcoal and watercolor on paper, 11½ x 6½ in.

Gift of Phillip C. Murray, 1983 (1983.57.104)

Anthony Frederick "Tony" Sarg (1880–1942) was a prolific commercial illustrator, designer, and puppeteer. Born in Guatemala to German parents, he worked in London from 1905 to 1915 before immigrating to the United States, where he established a studio in Manhattan. His first love was marionette theater, which he did much to promote in America. He supported his theatrical efforts through a vast output of commercial art, including book and magazine illustrations; wallpaper and fabric designs; toys and games; shop windows; and commercial interiors. He worked as artistic director for the first Macy's Christmas parades, designing the pageant's first giant figural balloons in 1927.

Sarg, his wife Bertha, and their daughter Mary began summering on Nantucket in 1920. They became popular seasonal figures; he staged marionette shows, designed posters for charity events, and incorporated island scenes into his designs while Bert ran a shop selling his mass-produced toys and decorative items. While the shower-curtain design shown here was probably never produced commercially, it is characteristic of Sarg's work, perfectly capturing his constant drive to turn humor and fun into gold. The design toys with the idea of Nantucket as a watery playground, with nods to bathing and downpours of varying intensities. Even though a shark and lightning may lurk, the sun and rain conspire to crown the old Unitarian Church with rainbows and flowers.<sup>124</sup>



Self-caricature, 1919, by Tony Sarg. Gift of Phillip C. Murray, 1983 (1983.57.98a).





*Shower Curtain.*

*Title. "Shower for Polly Sang".*



## Pocket drafting set, ca. 1800

Benjamin Bunker (1751–1842). Brass, 5½ x 2½ x 1¼ in. (case)

Gift of Craig Havemeyer, Mary Havemeyer Beman, and Daniel Havemeyer, 1986 (1986.114.1)

Benjamin Bunker (1751–1842) is best known as the island's first native-born silversmith, but he also worked as a surveyor and later in life as a clock- and watchmaker. He engraved his initials onto the lid of this set of drafting instruments as well as his name in sinuous letters onto the back of the set's folding rule.<sup>125</sup>

The three names engraved on the front of the case record the set's distinguished subsequent ownership. It passed first to William Mitchell (1791–1869), who learned coopering as a young man but gave it up in favor of teaching. He supplemented his meager income by surveying, rating marine chronometers for local sea captains, and making astronomical observations for the U.S. Coast Survey. Although he worked as cashier of the Pacific Bank from 1837 until his retirement in 1861, he was widely respected as a self-taught astronomer. He and his wife Lydia (1792–1861) cultivated an atmosphere of learning in their home, and their most

famous child was Maria Mitchell (1818–89), America's first female astronomer and the founding professor of astronomy at Vassar College. "We always had books and were bookish people," she once wrote.<sup>126</sup>

The drafting set passed from William to his grandson, William Mitchell Barney (1846–1923), who, although he spent most of his professional life in banking, worked for the Coast Survey for a time in his youth.<sup>127</sup> He gave the set to his uncle, Henry Mitchell (1830–1902), William and Lydia's eldest son. Henry was a distinguished hydrographic engineer who spent four decades with the Coast Survey. In 1854, he carried out a survey of the tides and currents in Nantucket and Vineyard sounds and later was involved in important surveys and harbor improvements from Maine to Mississippi. He was elected a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 1866, as his father and sister had been before him in 1842 and 1848, respectively.<sup>128</sup>





## Catboat *Monomoy*, ca. 1925

Stanley B. Butler (1872–1960). Painted and varnished wood, bronze, 15 ft. 3 in. x 6 ft. 7 in.

Gift of John and Ada A. Strassenburgh, 1986 (1986.145.1)

"This little masterpiece" is how marine surveyor Edwin B. Athearn described the catboat *Monomoy* before it was presented to the historical association in 1986. "A true classic," the boat is made of oak keel and frames, cedar planking and deck, and mahogany king plank and washboards. It features an impressive centerboard made of solid bronze, instead of the usual wood, to add stiffness in the water. The seventeen-foot spruce mast, seventeen-foot fir boom, and thirteen-foot spruce gaff, when rigged, allow for an immense sail area that works with the shallow hull to hasten the boat through the water.<sup>129</sup>

*Monomoy* is the work of waterman and boatbuilder Stanley B. Butler (1872–1960). Butler came from Cotuit on Cape Cod, where he was already building race-winning catboats in his early twenties. "An expert at the helm" the *Barnstable Patriot* declared him in 1895.<sup>130</sup> Following his father's example, he became a fisherman, dredging flounder, quahogs, and oysters from the waters of eastern Long Island, Block Island Sound, and Nantucket Sound. In the mid-1910s, he began working the winter season in Nantucket; by 1920, he and his family lived on island full time. Although they had a place in town, his boat shop was in Monomoy.





Subsequent owners believed that Butler built this boat for A. Lawrence Lowell, the president of Harvard University, whose summer house overlooked Cotuit Bay on the Cape. Although Lowell may have owned a Butler boat, he did not own this one. Newspaper accounts record Butler, his son, and summer resident Alvin Fargo Jr. racing the *Monomoy* and other Butler cats in Nantucket Yacht Club races in the late 1920s. When the Butlers moved back to Cape Cod in the 1930s, the boat stayed on Nantucket. Peg and Harding Greene of 'Sconset bought it about 1948, hired Butler to refurbish it, and then raced it with the Wauwinet Yacht Club. John and Ada Strassenburgh, also of 'Sconset, sailed it out of Polpis Harbor beginning in the mid-1960s, having it refurbished for a final time in 1978 by Byron Coffin.







## Cylinder desk, 1808

Heman Ellis (1777–1816). Wood, 45 $\frac{3}{8}$  x 41 $\frac{1}{8}$  x 21 $\frac{3}{8}$  in.

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Amos B. Hostetter Jr., 1987 (1987.215.1)

Practical, seaward-focused Nantucket was never a center of artistic innovation during the whaling period, but the breakdown of Quaker social and cultural dominance on the island after the American Revolution opened the door for a flowering of creativity in the folk and decorative arts, of which this desk is one of the finest examples. Cabinetmaker Heman Ellis (1777–1816) made the desk in 1808 for Sylvanus Ewer (1767–1836), a wealthy Nantucket shipowner. Its cylinder front; flat, veneered surfaces; and tapered legs were stylish and up-to-date, revealing that at least one Nantucketer of means was aware of the latest styles coming out of American and European urban centers at the time and wanted to furnish his home in the modern taste.

Heman Ellis worked on island from 1800 or 1801 to 1814, when the economic disruption of the War of 1812 presumably inspired his departure for Providence. His design solution for this cylinder desk is novel and suggests he had only seen examples in illustrations. High-fashion cylinder desks typically had lids that slid up into the case. Ellis's lid drops down like that of a traditional slant-lid desk. Two other pieces in the collection, a small stand and a lady's writing desk, are attributed to Ellis based on the style of their decorative inlay.<sup>131</sup>



## Wedding dress, 1928

Bonwit Teller, New York, N.Y. Silk, cotton, steel wire  
Gift of Arline Bishop Scipes, 1987 (1987.217.1–.3)

This elegant wedding dress was worn by five brides from three generations of the same family. It was first worn by longtime Nantucket summer resident Arline Preston for her wedding in 'Sconset in 1928. As originally constructed, it had a classic 1920s straight silhouette with a calf-length skirt and panniers—structured pieces below the waist—that added hip interest. The rose-point lace trimming the dress was worn by Arline's mother and sisters as part of their own wedding ensembles. Arline wore the dress with a detachable train and a long lace veil that her sister had brought from Italy.

The next two brides to wear the dress were Arline's nieces, who had been flower girls at her wedding. When Barbara Anne Nicholas wore the dress in 1940, she had her dressmaker refashion it to be full length, substituting a new satin underskirt for the original but retaining the original panniers and lace. The bodice was altered to be more fitted, reflecting the prevailing silhouette of the 1940s, and she wore the original Italian veil with a new headpiece. Each bride after her also customized the ensemble with a new headpiece. Her second cousin Patricia Webster wore the dress in 1945.

More than two decades later, the dress passed to the next generation when bride number two's daughter Valerie Jackson wore it for her wedding in 1968. She was a tiny size five and had the dress taken in. The last bride to wear the dress was Arline's granddaughter Debra Roby in 1970, and luckily she was also a size five, so the dress needed no additional alterations. It remains today as she left it.<sup>132</sup> JN



*Top*, Barbara Anne (Nicholas) Jackson and Patricia (Webster) Hayes; *middle*, Clark and Arline (Preston) Bishop with young Barbara and Patricia; *bottom*, Valerie (Jackson) Clark and Debra (Roby) Marquis. All gift of Arline Bishop Scipes, 1987 (P18356, P18354, P18877, P18355, P18357).







## *Sallie Gail Harris, 1930*

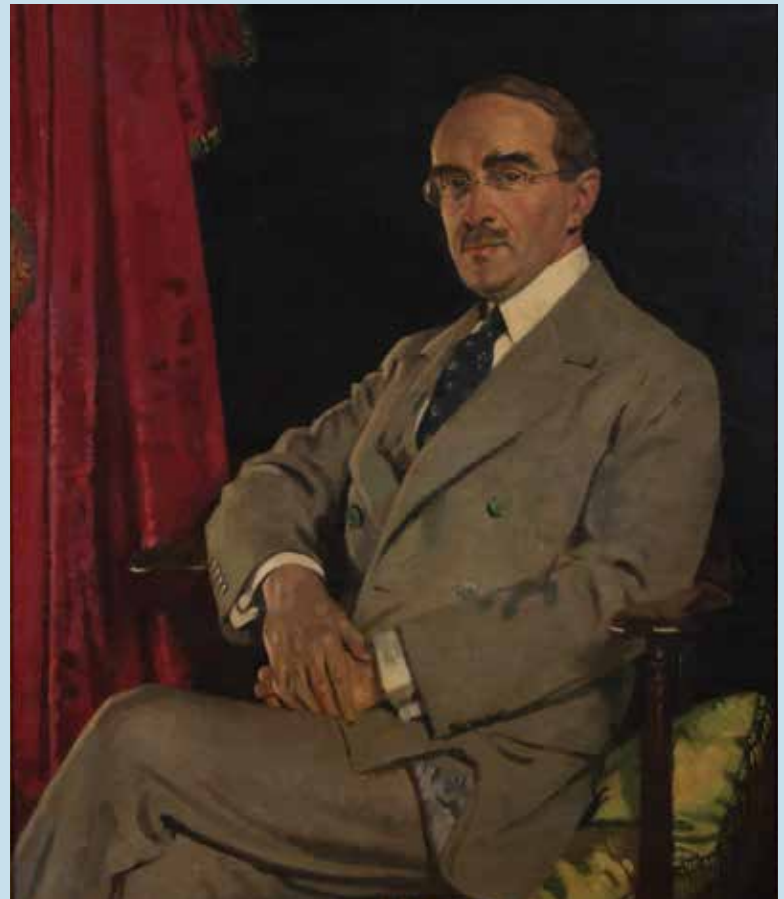
Sir William Orpen (1878–1931). Oil on canvas, 30 x 25 in.

Bequest of Oswald A. Tupancy, 1987 (1995.318.1)

Sallie Gail Harris (1917–83) was the daughter of Julian H. Harris (1876–1933), a Detroit attorney and investment banker, and Jacqueline (Stephens) Harris (1891–1979), daughter of a Michigan lumber baron. She came to Nantucket for the first time in 1928 when her parents added the island to their annual round of holiday destinations, which heretofore had included frequent trips to Europe and Bermuda. In 1930, the same year leading society artist Sir William Orpen (1878–1931) completed this portrait sketch of her in his London studio, her father commissioned architect Alfred Shurrocks to design a summer house for the family on Nantucket's north shore adjacent to Capaum Pond. Named Dionis, the house was the largest private residence on island for a time. Unfortunately, Julian died in 1933 after enjoying only two seasons at the house, but Jacqueline and Sallie Gail continued to live there during summer visits until 1946, becoming during this time well-known members of the island seasonal community and active participants in many island organizations.<sup>133</sup>

In addition to commissioning work from the best artists and architects, the Harrises actively collected antiques, books, rugs, European art, and Japanese prints and ceramics to decorate their homes in Michigan and Nantucket. When Jacqueline sold Dionis in 1946, she moved many fine items into the Thomas Macy House at 99 Main Street, which she and

Sallie Gail purchased the following year. During her lifetime, Jacqueline engaged in extensive philanthropic work and gave artwork to a number of public institutions. In this spirit, she wanted 99 Main Street to be preserved for public benefit by the Nantucket Historical Association. When she died, the property passed to her daughter and subsequently to Sallie's second husband, Oswald A. Tupancy (1906–87). He fulfilled Jacqueline and Sallie Gail's wishes by bequeathing the house and its contents to the association in 1987, complete with a trust fund to provide for their perpetual care.<sup>134</sup>



*Julian H. Harris, 1928, by Sir William Orpen (1878–1931).*

Oil on canvas, 40 x 34 in. Courtesy of the Detroit Historical Society, gift of Jacqueline Harris (1970.77.1).

## Cann, ca. 1800

Benjamin Bunker (1751–1842). Silver, 5 x 5 x 3½ in.

Gift of the Friends of the Nantucket Historical Association, 1988 (1988.63.1)

The elegant pear-shaped body and sinuous handle of this cann, a form of drinking vessel popular in America in the eighteenth century, are testaments to the skill of Nantucket-born silversmith Benjamin Bunker (1751–1842).

No silversmiths worked on Nantucket until the mid-eighteenth century, by which point the island's whaling and mercantile economy had grown to the point where it could support one or two resident makers. Quaker simplicity held nothing against plainly worked silver, and elegant examples equal in quality to this cann survive from the island's other makers. A survey of 149 island household inventories created

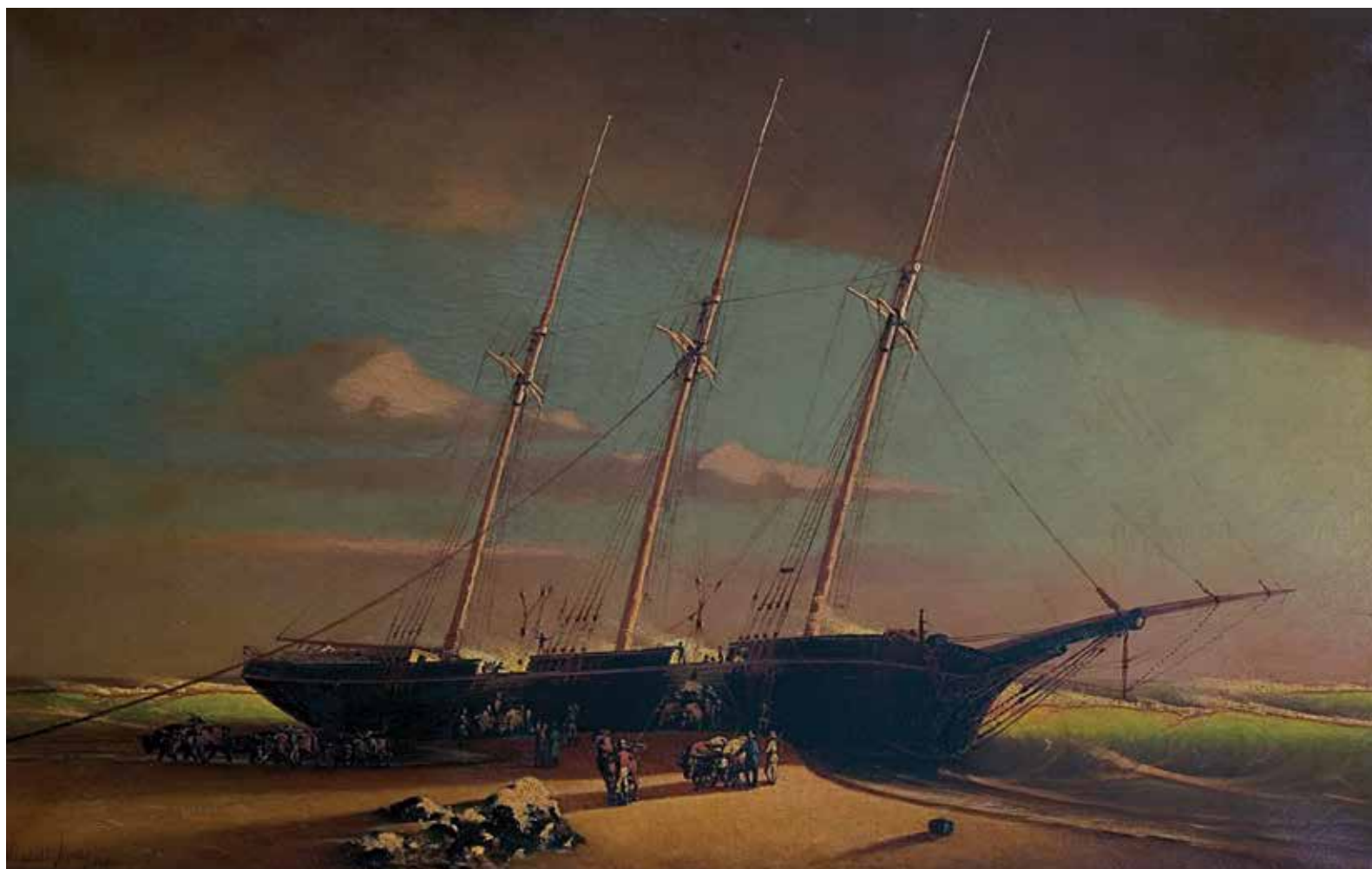
between 1706 and 1776 reveals that eighty-eight, or fifty-nine percent, contained silver items—most often spoons but less commonly porringers and cups of one form or another. Silver buttons and buckles became more common as the island became wealthier toward the end of the eighteenth century, but silver candlesticks, coffee pots, salvers, and plates, all common in other New England seaports, are not listed for Nantucket.<sup>135</sup>

Although the cann is inscribed "M P / to / E M P" on the bottom, the item's owners have not yet been identified.









## *Wreck of the Warren Sawyer, 1888*

Wendell Macy (1845–1913). Oil on canvas, 30 x 48 in.

Gift of the Friends of the Nantucket Historical Association, 1988 (1988.75.1)

The coastal schooner *Warren Sawyer*, bound from New Orleans to Boston with a cargo of cotton and scrap iron, grounded on a shoal and was driven from there onto Nantucket's south shore on the night of December 22, 1884. Captain Edwin L. Saunders and his seven men were rescued within an hour by the crew of the Surfside Lifesaving Station, despite the schooner rolling violently in the surf. Over the next two weeks, before the wreck broke up, islanders worked to discharge the vessel's cargo and salvage its spars and equipment, while the curious turned out to take in the dramatic scene. "Hundreds of townspeople visit the wreck daily to witness the operations," the *Nantucket Journal* reported on New Year's Day 1885, "and the view upon the beach is truly a novel one."<sup>136</sup>

Artist Wendell Macy (1845–1913), always looking for subjects that would sell, painted at least seven versions of this scene. He exhibited this one at Congdon's Pharmacy on Main Street and later shipped it to New Bedford for exhibition. The *Inquirer and Mirror* praised the painting as one of the artist's "finest efforts in marine work, in which he has been so successful heretofore."<sup>137</sup>



Remains of the *Warren Sawyer*, 1885, by Baldwin Coolidge (1845–1928). Courtesy of Historic New England.



## Sign from the Skipper, 1940s

Unknown artist. Painted wood, 28 x 20 in.

Purchase, 1989 (1989.136.1)

In 1920, Gladys Wood (1886–1971) and Margaret “Edna” Prentice (1889–1977) opened a tea room called the Skipper in a house on Liberty Street. Both young women had food service experience from working in servicemen’s canteens and cafeterias in Europe during World War I. Their island enterprise thrived, and they sought a larger space at the end of their first season. Unable to find one on land, they purchased the fifty-seven-year-old coasting schooner *Allen Gurney*, leased a slip on Steamboat Wharf, and refurbished the decrepit vessel into their new tea room. They built a kitchen, staff apartments, and a large, gaily decorated dining room into an existing pierside building and covered the schooner’s deck with a jaunty green and orange awing to protect *al*

*fresco* diners. To avoid unpleasant motion, they had holes cut into the hull to settle the schooner on the harbor bottom; the water in the hold rose and fell with the tides. From this start, the Skipper became an island summer institution, operating from 1921 to 1984. Generations of islanders and summer visitors loved its faintly exotic dining experience and harbor views. Eventually the original schooner deteriorated, leading to the construction of a replacement restaurant on pilings in the 1950s. For a brief period in the 1970s, the place was called the Relaxed Lobster. Gladys Wood sold her interest in the business in the late 1920s and became a leading island real-estate agent. Edna Prentice sold her interest in 1944.<sup>138</sup>



The Skipper restaurant at Steamboat Wharf, 1929.  
Gift of Jean Louise Allen, 1997 (P19317).

# THE · SKIPPER NANTUCKET · MASS



STEAMBOAT · WHARF  
LUNCHEON · TEA · SUPPER  
JUNE · TO · OCTOBER





## Dollhouse, 1982

Robert Cary Caldwell (1919–95), Katherine Deutsch (1920–89), and others. Wood, cloth, paper, plastic, paint, 32 x 36 x 24 in. Gift of the estate of Robert Cary Caldwell in memory of Katherine Sanford Deutsch, 1995 (1995.19.1)

The house at 25 Pleasant Street was built around 1745. In 1846, James S. and Margaret Cary acquired it, and for more than one hundred years the place was noted for its many Chinese decorations, brought to the island by James's father, Captain James Cary, a noted China-trade captain. The house eventually descended to Robert Cary Caldwell, who sold it in 1956. Between 1977 and 1982, he made this dollhouse-sized model of the building for Richard and Katherine Deutsch, the owners of the house at the time. Katherine later helped decorate the model, hiring artists to make furniture, paint pictures, weave and embroider fabrics, and assemble hundreds of decorative and domestic details. The lower floors represent the house largely as it looked in the early 1980s, while the playroom and sleeping areas assembled in the attic are pure fantasy. "Nobody would ever want to sleep up there," Richard Deutsch said. "It was much too hot."<sup>139</sup>



## Sperm-whale skeleton, 1997

*Physeter macrocephalus*. Bone and ivory, 45 ft.

Custody granted by the National Marine Fisheries Service, 1998 (1998.3, field no. 97631PC)

Nantucket's fortunes were built on the sperm whale. For a century, the island's whalers specialized in hunting this specific species for the high-quality oil and clean-burning spermaceti that could be harvested from its body. Since the end of whaling from the island, the sperm whale has become a symbol of the island's seafaring heritage and economic success. It is no surprise, then, that when a forty-ton sperm whale died on Low Beach on New Year's Eve 1997, there was an immediate popular surge of enthusiasm to keep the creature's skeleton on island and add it to the Nantucket Whaling Museum.

After a team of scientists completed a necropsy of the whale, volunteers from the community, led by fishermen,

excavators, and staff from the historical association, undertook the noisome and filthy process of dissecting the animal and preserving its bones. The federal government granted permission for the Whaling Museum to keep the skeleton by the end of January 1998, and this step led to renewed efforts within the historical association to plan and fund a major reconstruction of the aging museum in order to place the skeleton on public view. It took a number of years for the bones to be cleaned, leached of their oil, and prepared for exhibition, and even longer to rebuild the museum, but the renewed museum opened in 2005 with the skeleton of the whale as its dramatic centerpiece.<sup>140</sup>



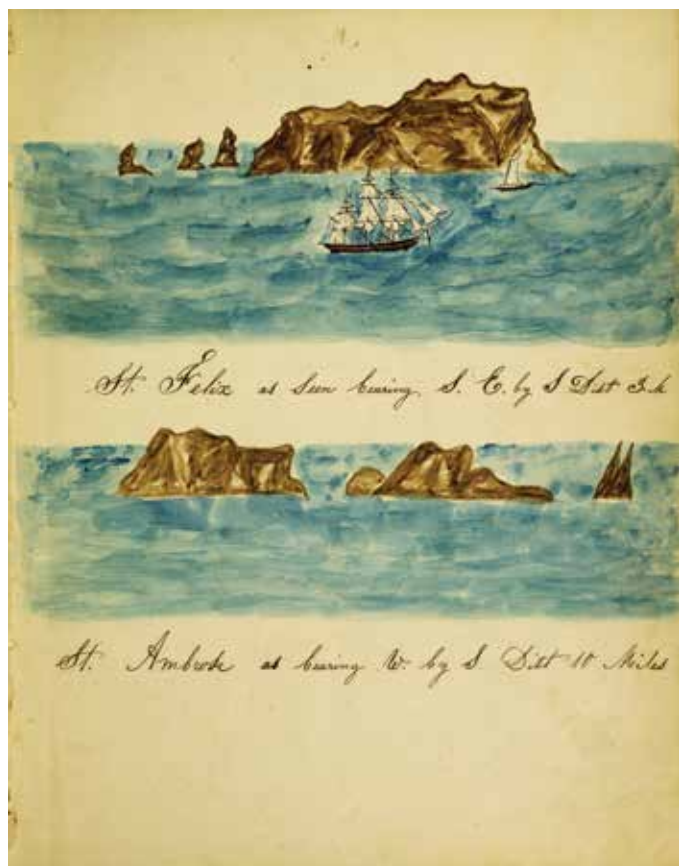
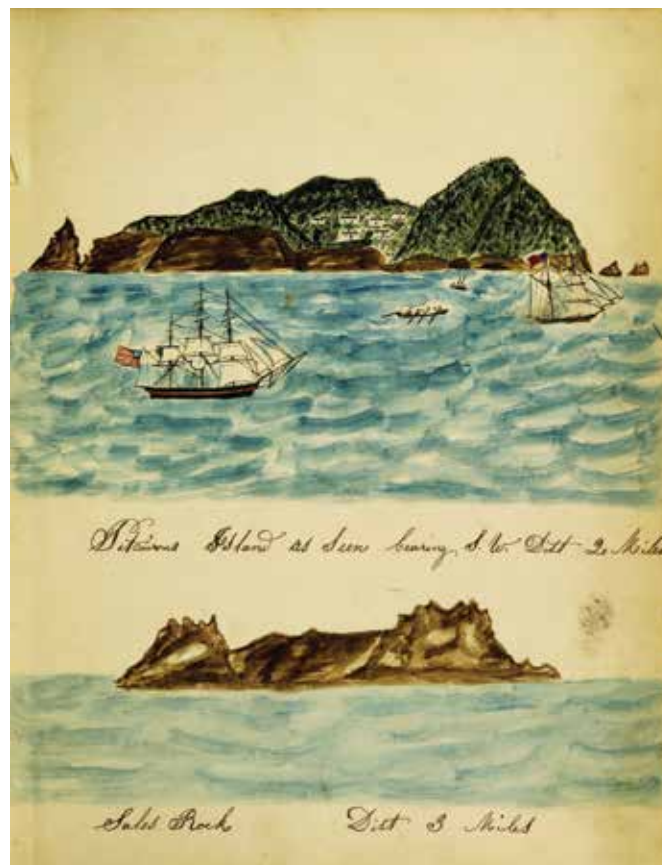
The cutting-in crew on Low Beach, 1998. Courtesy of Mariellen Scannell (SC637-1). Historic tools brought from the Whaling Museum proved more effective than modern instruments in dissecting the whale. *From left to right*, Josh Eldridge, Rick Morcom, Pete Kaizer, Bob Butler, Bob DeCosta, Jeremy Slavitz, and two unidentified men.



Photograph by Peter Vanderwarker, 2005.



March the 5th Ship Nantucket at Calicut  
 Tuesday morning our boat did not run very well  
 and as we expected to get to sea the next day  
 we thought we would call in at Calicut as she  
 was healthy and have her ground lashed.  
 As we called on Dr Johnson he came and  
 said nothing was the matter but a little  
 cold. And he gave her a powder to take three  
 and left me for me to give her at bed time  
 which I did and put her in a warm bath  
 but at 3 o'clock in the morning she was taken  
 convulsed and we were soon in that they  
 was no hope for her recovery, we sent immediately  
 for a Physician and every thing was done that  
 could be done but all in vain she was found  
 no doubt by taking the strong powder  
 what can be done what can be done was all  
 that we could say the threat of losing our  
 Kate was more than we could bear to think of  
 she was after child to get to live, and at  
 the 11th which is the day she breathed her last  
 what shall be done with our darling was  
 the next question with us both. Could we  
 think of burying her at Calicut none could not  
 we must take her with us away, so we have  
 had a lead coffin made and the Corps  
 embalmed to take home with us  
 7th Thursday to day we have had the remains  
 of our little one taken on board and  
 we are ready for sea  
 10th took our anchors and left Calicut



## "Islands Seen by Ship *Nauticon*," 1848–53

Susan Veeder (1816–97). Ink and watercolor on paper, 10¼ x 8 in.

Gift of the Friends of the Nantucket Historical Association, 1995 (Ms. 220, log 347)

Susan Veeder (1816–97) and her young sons accompanied her husband, Captain Charles A. Veeder (1809–78), on a whaling voyage to the Pacific Ocean in the ship *Nauticon* between fall 1848 and spring 1853. The voyage was an eventful one, which Susan described and illustrated in lively detail in her private journal. Four months out, a daughter, Mary Frances, was born at Talcahuano, Chile. All was well until early 1850, as Susan poignantly recorded:

*March the 5th Ship Nauticon at Tahita*

*tuesday morning our babe didnot seem very well and as we expected to go to sea the next day we thoat we would Call in a Phisician . . . So we Called in a Dr Johnson he came and said nothing was the matter but a little Cold, and he gave her a powder to take then and left one for me*

*to give her at bed time which i did and put her in a warm bath but at 3 oclock in the morning she was taken Convulsed and we very soon see that they was no hope for her recovery, we sent amediatly for a Phisician and every thing was done that Could be done but all in vain She was poisned no doubt by takeing the Second powder what can be done what can be done was all that we could say . . . She was a fine child to good to live, and at 11 oclock Am She breathed her last what Shall be done with our darling was the next question with us both. Could we think of burying her at tahita no, we could not we must take her with us away. So we have had a lead Coffin made and the Corps Embalmed to take home with us*



Headstone in Nantucket's Newtown Cemetery, 2005, by Georgen Charnes (NTC-G4). "Here lie the remains of Mary Frances daughter of Charles A. & Susan C. Veeder, who died at Tahiti, Society Islands, March 6, 1850. Aged 13 mos. & 6 days."



Susan Veeder, 1879 (GPN768).

## Malvina Marshall's homecoming dress, 1861

Unknown maker. Silk and cotton

Gift of Helen Marshall Hall Brown in memory of Florence Farrier Hall, 1999 (1999.37.6)

Just like Susan Veeder in 1848, Malvina Marshall (1820–85) chose to accompany her sea-captain husband on whaling voyages in 1851 and 1856, trading the familiar comforts of home and community for the chance of adventure and the surety of many long months of family togetherness.

Malvina's father, Captain Seth Pinkham, died on a whaling voyage to the Pacific in 1844, a devastating event that likely influenced her decision to sail with her husband, Captain Joseph Marshall (1811–79), in the brig *Sea Queen* of Westport in 1851. She was pregnant with her first child when she boarded the *Sea Queen*, and she gave birth to daughter Helen at Faial in the Azores six weeks later. For eight of the next nine-and-a-half years, the family was at sea, time Malvina spent rearing and educating her daughter, learning navigation, and keeping up a large correspondence with family and friends at home.

In 1856, she and Helen followed Joseph onto his next command, the bark *Aurora* of Westport (see page 186). Preparing to return home in 1861, Malvina grew concerned that her wardrobe was worn and outdated after four-and-a-half years at sea. She wrote ahead to her sister, Elizabeth Crosby, on Nantucket asking that a dress in "the prevailing fashion" be delivered to the *Aurora* when the ship docked at New Bedford so that she might disembark in something "suitable." Elizabeth ordered a dress of black and brown striped silk with long sleeves, sloped shoulders, and a fitted bodice. The cut of the skirt, meant to be worn over a crinoline, presented just the fashionable silhouette Malvina requested. Although the bonnet Malvina also requested does not survive, the dress retains its original lace trim at the collar and cuffs, as well as the beautiful diamond-patterned velvet trim that finishes the sleeves. In a nod to practicality, the dress has a pocket set into the right side seam of the skirt.<sup>141</sup>



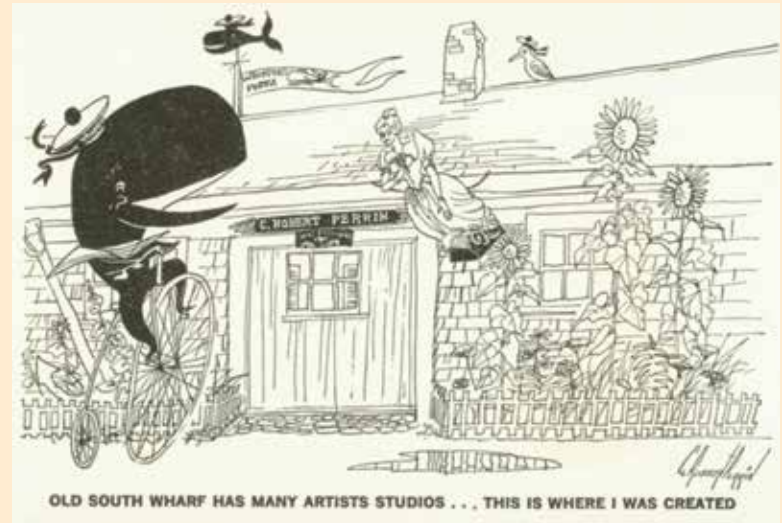




## Nancy Tucket figurehead, 1961

C. Robert Perrin (1915–99). Painted balsawood, 45 x 17 x 17½ in.  
Gift of the estate of C. Robert Perrin, 2000 (2000.28.1)

Artist Charles Robert “Bob” Perrin (1915–99) maintained a summer studio on Nantucket from 1956 to 1999, selling watercolors, illustrations, and his signature humorous drawings of Whopper the bicycling whale tootling around the island. His friend William Crichton carved a small figurehead to sit outside Perrin’s first shop on Old South Wharf, but when Crichton died unexpectedly, Perrin returned the figure to Crichton’s family. To replace it, Perrin created this figure in the winter of 1961–62. He named the figure “Nancy Tucket” and designed her right hand to hold a bouquet of fresh flowers. Like many historic ship’s figureheads, Nancy gazes woodenly forward, her svelte figure rising from a firm platform. Unlike her spiritual ancestors, however, she is carved from lightweight balsa, which made it easy for Perrin to carry her inside at the end of each season. In 1974, rot in the top of her head forced Perrin to keep her inside permanently, where she remained until his death in 1999.<sup>142</sup>



Postcard by Bob Perrin advertising his Old South Wharf studio, 1964.  
Gift of Ellen Ray, 2010 (Ms. 521).



## Tristram Coffin medal, ca. 1827

Unknown English maker. Copper alloy, 2 $\frac{1}{8}$  in. dia.

Gift of Rev. Carl and Kay Werner, 2001 (2001.50.1)

Tristram Coffin (1605–81) came to America in 1642. In 1660, he, his wife Dionis, and some of their children were among the earliest English people to settle on Nantucket. In the three-and-a-half centuries since, Coffin has been much honored by his numberless descendants as a founding father of Nantucket.

Admiral Sir Isaac Coffin (1759–1839) was one of these proud descendants. Born in Boston to a family that remained loyal at the time of the Revolution, he entered the Royal Navy in 1773. A distinguished career allowed him to advance through the ranks and amass a considerable personal fortune. Looking to create legacies with his money, he visited Nantucket in September 1826. At the suggestion of Samuel H. Jenks, local publisher and school advocate, Coffin purchased a building and left an endowment to found a Lancastrian-style school, open free to all children descended from Tristram Coffin—a qualification that applied to a majority of the young white people on the island at the time.<sup>143</sup>

On his return to England, Admiral Coffin commissioned a medal to commemorate his famous ancestor. He liberally handed out the medals to all male Coffin descendants he met, and he sent two hundred to the school trustees in 1828 to award students for “superior merit and industry.” He gave a gilt example to the president of the trustees and a silver-gilt one to at least one friend. Numerous copies in a variety of lesser materials were made throughout the nineteenth century for circulation at Coffin family gatherings and reunions.<sup>144</sup>



*Admiral Sir Isaac Coffin*, ca. 1810, by Gilbert Stuart (1755–1828). Oil on scored panel, 33 x 26 $\frac{1}{2}$  in. Gift of the Friends of the Nantucket Historical Association in memory of Tucker Gosnell with partial gift of Catherine C. Lastavica, M.D., 2005 (2005.4.1).









## Braided rug, 1980s

Mary F. Marcelino (1901–91). Dyed and printed cotton, 25 x 16½ in.  
Gift of Patti Clinton, 2004 (2004.10.1)

Mary F. Marcelino (1901–91) lived all but the last years of her life on Nantucket. The daughter of Azorean immigrants, she married barber John Marcelino, also from the Azores, in 1925. After John died suddenly of cancer in 1943, she supported herself by renting rooms and cleaning houses. She eventually turned to sewing and ran a mending and alterations business out of her York Street living room. She told two high-school-age interviewers in 1981 that all she did was repair work: "Once a lady brought her a bolt of fabric and asked her to make drapes. Mrs. Marcelino turned her down because she was too busy completing all the requests that she had for repair work." She was kept very busy. "Sewing is always looking me right in the face," she said. "If it's there, I have to do it."<sup>145</sup>

Mary made this braided rug from scraps of printed cotton she collected from the dresses she altered for island women. She gave the incomplete rug to her neighbor, Patti Clinton, to finish, but it never was. Mary's pins, needle, and thread remain were she left off.

## *Commercial Wharf, Nantucket, 1949–50*

Roger Louis Epply (1919–96). Watercolor on paper, 17 x 23 in.  
Gift of William R. Epply, 2005 (2005.2.1)

While other artists celebrated Nantucket's famous shingled houses and rose-covered cottages, Roger Epply found color and form in the island's industrial waterfront, which remained a working district of lumber yards, fuel docks, and fishing piers until converted into a yacht harbor and retail district in the 1960s. This view looks west toward the Unitarian Church from a point between Commercial Wharf and Old South Wharf. The iron gas holders of the Nantucket Gas & Electric Company frame the view, the one on the left dating from 1920, the one on the right from 1929–30. The brick building at the center of the picture held the gas generating plant, linked to the holders by the adjacent brick valve house. "The plant shows that Nantucket is a very progressive town," seventh-grader Jane Tomlinson wrote after a visit to the facility in 1936.<sup>146</sup>

Roger Louis Epply (1919–96), a native of Manchester, New Hampshire, attended Dartmouth College but left to serve in the Pacific as a photographer for the Army Signal Corps during World War II. After the war, he studied at the Vesper George School of Art in Boston. This watercolor probably dates to a visit he and his wife, Patricia, made to Nantucket in the summer of 1949 and is likely the work entitled *Commercial Wharf, Nantucket* that appeared alongside other island and New England scenes at his first solo exhibition in 1950. For many years Epply was an active member of the art scene around Old Saybrook, Connecticut, and he remains known for his watercolors, marine paintings, and photography of commercial shipping.<sup>147</sup>







## Bathing costume, ca. 1900

Unknown maker. Wool and cotton or linen

Gift of Clement A. Penrose Jr. Family Trust, 2005 (2005.22.1)

This bathing costume belonged to Adeline Penrose (1872–1950) of Baltimore, who started summering on Nantucket with her second husband and three sons in 1908 and returned each year through 1947. She was a woman of comfortable means through inheritance and marriage and was able to enjoy the leisure of a few months on Nantucket annually, where she hosted teas at the Golf Club and was active in the 'Sconset Casino Women's Auxiliary.

The costume, made of navy-blue fabric, comprises a one-piece bodice and bloomers, over which a matching skirt is worn. These pieces would have been worn together with long cotton stockings, which do not survive; a small cap completes the ensemble. The corset preserved with the costume provided shape around the wearer's middle and was provided with garters to hold up the stockings. The extensive corrosion and spotting on the corset reflect its extensive use in salt water.



A summer bathing party at Jetties Beach, ca. 1900 (P3499).

## Candlesticks, mid-nineteenth century

Unknown maker. Whale bone and ivory, 9½ x 4 x 4 in. each

Gift of the Friends of the Nantucket Historical Association with support from the Gosnell and Geschke families, 2008 (2008.10.1 & .2)

What better symbol can there be of Nantucket's former maritime prosperity than candlesticks made from the ivory and bone of a sperm whale? The very animal whose teeth and jawbone were shaped on a lathe to create this elegant pair of stands was killed so that its bodily fats could be turned into illuminants to light the nation's way and lubricants to speed the machinery of its industrial progress. Although the thought of burning candles made from sperm whale in holders made from sperm whale may offend modern sensibilities, which value whales for their majesty and beauty rather than for their industrial utility, in the nineteenth century such an act was a natural expression of man's dominion over nature.

Spermaceti candles made up about twenty percent of the total value of whale products manufactured on Nantucket in the 1830s. Bright, clean-burning, and long-lasting, they sold for a premium and could be found illuminating the best homes in the country. The island's leading product, ahead of candles, was refined sperm oil, much of which was also burned for illumination. The following snapshot of key aspects of the island's economy in 1837 shows the relative positions of oil and candles among the island's highest value manufactures.



Scrimshander's table lathe, with whale-bone components, late nineteenth century. Gift of Barbara Johnson, 1993 (1993.42.1).

### *Nantucket industries, 1837*

Vessels in the whale fishery, 74 (25,875 tons)

Sperm oil imported, 1,206,418 gallons; value, \$1,085,776

Whale oil imported, 70,591 gallons; value, \$28,236

Men employed, 1,897

Capital invested, \$2,520,000

Summer and winter oil manufactured, 2,014,193 gallons;  
value \$1,873,199

Sperm candles manufactured, 1,611,355 pounds;  
value, \$515,663

Men employed refining oil, 124

Men employed making candles, 93

Capital invested, \$1,318,000

Oil casks made, 65,000; value, \$86,000

Men employed, 67

Capital invested, \$60,000

Iron bar made, 93 tons; value, \$10,330

Men employed, 35

Capital invested, \$30,000

Candle boxes manufactured, 47,392; value, \$11,848

Men employed, 15

Capital invested, \$12,000

Whaleboats manufactured, 130; value, \$7,800

Men employed, 14

Capital invested, \$10,000<sup>148</sup>











## Wholecloth quilt, ca. 1830

Phebe Swain (1795–1882). Cotton, wool, 105 x 106 in.

Gift of John Chadbourne, 2008 (2008.29.1)

This quilt was made by Phebe (Starbuck) Swain (1795–1882), wife of blacksmith George Swain Jr. (1791–1880, see page 84). The top of the quilt is assembled from five panels of a beautiful glazed cotton cloth richly roller-printed with a bold pattern of foxgloves and ferns. The backing comprises five panels of a less showy but equally beautiful geometric printed cotton. The quilt is filled with wool batting, said to be from Nantucket sheep, and edged with red, blue, and white Trenton tape, a typical edging for early- to mid-nineteenth-century American quilts from the East Coast. The whole is hand-quilted in a clamshell pattern with a smaller leaf pattern inset within the shells. Variations in the stitching may indicate that more than one person quilted the piece.<sup>149</sup>

The glazed fabric for the top was imported, probably from Great Britain. Roller printing of fabrics using engraved copper plates was not done in America until the mid-nineteenth century, but such printing had been practiced in Great Britain since the late 1780s. Family tradition says that this glazed fabric was not merely imported but smuggled onto

Nantucket through the British coastal blockade during the War of 1812. At least fourteen-and-a-half yards of it are used in this magnificent quilt, which seems to have been finished years after the war, as the American-made backing fabric appears to be of later date than the imported fabric.

Nantucket's seaborne trade suffered extensive restriction and loss during the War of 1812 due to British privateer activity, the Royal Navy blockade, and the U.S. government's own foreign-trade embargo, imposed in December 1813. During the summer of 1814, islanders negotiated a neutrality agreement with British officials, which allowed some coastal trade and codfishing to resume. Lack of food and fuel caused widespread hardship on the island during this time.<sup>150</sup>



## Spermo Cutting in Whales on Japan, 1822, ca. 1823

J. Fisher (life dates uncertain). Oil on canvas, 18¾ x 24¾ in.

Gift of the Friends of the Nantucket Historical Association, 2008 (2008.31.2)

The 296-ton ship *Spermo* made just one whaling voyage, sailing to the Pacific under Captain James Bunker between August 1820 and March 1823 and returning home with a profitable 1,920 barrels of sperm oil. Unusually, four paintings by the same hand survive depicting events from the voyage: this canvas and another in the historical association collection, one at the Nantucket Atheneum, and one in private hands. Why so many paintings were made of this voyage is unknown. Who precisely painter J. Fisher was is also unknown. Writers have speculated that he may have been Captain John Fisher (b. 1789), the master of the Nantucket whaler *General Jackson*, which was also in the Pacific from 1820 to 1823. Unfortunately, no evidence has been found to support this idea. Whoever the artist was, he painted the pictures on land, not mid-voyage as has sometimes been suggested. No artist would choose slow-drying oil paint as a pictorial medium while at sea.<sup>151</sup>

The artist, whoever he was, was clearly an experienced blue-water sailor and a whaler, for all the details of rig and action in the paintings are precisely correct. Atmospheric, dramatic, and informed, they are masterpieces of marine art. The scene *Spermo Cutting in Whales on Japan, 1822* captures the vile process of cutting the blubber off a slaughtered whale. Men haul aloft a large blanket piece, ready to be cut off, while an officer supervises from a boat in the cranes. The revolving carcass bloodies the water, attracting scavenging birds, while a lookout in the main royal cross-trees eyes the horizon for more whales.



SPEAR CUTTING IN WHALES ON JAPAN . . 1820



This Present Writing Indented made the Thirtieth Day of September  
in the Nineteenth Year of the Reign of George the Second of Great Britain  
& King Anneque Domini 1743. Betwixt John Cananoo Jun. an Indian  
of Sherbourn on the Island of Nantucket in the Province of the Massachusetts  
Bays in New England Labourer on the one part & John Meader of  
Sherbourn on Nantucket aforesaid Carpenter on the other part Witnesseth  
that the said John Cananoo for the Considerations herein after mentioned  
hath & hereby doth put out & Bind himself unto the said John Meader  
his Executors & Administrators to go for and in the Employ of him the  
said John Meader on the fishing and whaling Voyages at or about the said  
Island of Nantucket and on Nantucket Shoals & Seas & Coasts there  
abouts or Elsewhere (Davis's Straights Excepted) In the several and  
Successive Seasons thereof for the Term of Two Years & Eight months  
next ensuing the Date hereof During which Time & Term the  
said John Cananoo shall Diligently Constantly & Faithfully attend  
on and follow the said fishing and whaling Voyages at all proper  
Seasons that the said John Meader may not suffer Damage by  
his Neglect or Default. In Consideration whereof the said John  
Meader for himself his Executors & Administrators doth hereby Covenant  
Promise and agree to & with the said John Cananoo to find and provide  
Boats Craft & other Necessaries for him according to Custom and shall  
also pay and allow unto him the said John Cananoo the full Usual  
& Customary Price that is or shall be given to Indians that are in the  
same Employ for all the Fish Oyl and whale bone he the said John  
Cananoo shall take or Obtain for him during the said Term.  
In Witness whereof both Parties to the said Presents have Interchangeably set  
their hands & Seals the Day & Year first above Written

Signed Sealed & Delivered

In Our Presence and  
Approved of by us

George Fairbanks  
Joseph Cyja

} Justices of the peace

the mark of

John Cananoo



## Indenture for fishing and whaling voyages, 1745

John Meader (1713–97) and John Candanoo Jr. (life dates uncertain). Ink on paper, 12½ x 7¾ in.

Purchase from the Max and Heidi Berry Acquisition Fund, 2009 (Ms. 474, folder 17)

John Candanoo Jr. (life dates uncertain) was a Native Wampanoag man from Nantucket. In 1745, he was indentured to John Meader (1713–97) to work on fishing and whaling voyages in the waters around Nantucket for a term of two years and eight months. In exchange, Meader agreed to provide any necessary equipment and to pay Candanoo, in the vague language of the time, “the full usual and customary price that is or shall from time to time be given to Indians” employed in the island’s seasonal fisheries.

The arrival of the English on Nantucket in 1659 drastically altered the lifeways of the three thousand or so native people who already lived here. Over the next fifty years, as the English population grew through natural increase to seven hundred, the native community dwindled to eight hundred due to poverty, disease, and alcoholism caused by the English presence. English livestock-grazing and agriculture

radically changed the ecology of the island, removing trees, altering ground cover, and weakening the soil. Fishing and whaling became necessary economic alternatives for a native population that could no longer rely on the island’s land. As these fisheries developed, however, boats and equipment lay entirely in the hands of the English, leaving native people to provide the bulk of the labor. “Nearly every boat was manned in part, many almost entirely, by natives,” Obed Macy wrote in 1830. White men did not form a majority of the workforce in the island’s whale fishery until about the middle of the eighteenth century.<sup>152</sup>

John Meader worked as a carpenter when not whaling and was the father of the maker of the early whaleship model seen on page 111. Nothing more is known of John Candanoo’s life beyond this document.

## Yad, 2001

Morton Schlesinger (1921–2015) and Reva Schlesinger (1923–2016). Silver, whale ivory, 12½ x 1½ in.  
Gift of Reva and Morton Schlesinger, 2010 (2010.6.1)

This *yad*, a pointer for reading Torah in synagogue, was made by island silversmiths Mort and Reva Schlesinger, who were inspired to create it after studying silver *yadayim* from fifteenth-century Italy. The piece has the traditional pointing hand at one end but a harpoon emerging from a Star of David at the other. The shaft between these elements is elaborately chased with waves and scallop shells. A thin silver rope winds along the piece from the harpoon to the carved hand, which clasps the knotted end of the rope. The piece took two-and-a-half years to make; Mort carved the hand from whale ivory, while Reva did most of the chasing. The *yad* calls to mind the name of Nantucket's Jewish congregation, *Shirat Hayam* ("Star of the Sea"), where it was used for High Holy Day services when new, as well as Talmudic metaphors comparing Torah to the sea. "The boat sailing upon [the sea] is like a person's mind upon the depths of Torah," Rabbi

Rachel Sabath Beit-Halachmi once wrote in her column in the *Inquirer and Mirror*.<sup>153</sup>

Reva (1923–2016) and Mort (1921–2015) met in New York City. She began to learn silversmithing and jewelry making as a teenager at the 92nd Street YMHA, and he joined her in the craft after they married in 1947. During their professional years—she was a film editor, he a textile dyer—they made silver avocationally in the kitchen of their Brownstone apartment. After years of seasonal visits to Nantucket, they retired to the island in 1980. For thirty years, they created original and reproduction pieces which they sold through the Nantucket Looms, the museum shop at the historical association, and selected galleries. They are perhaps best remembered by their large circle of island friends for their active participation in community affairs.<sup>154</sup>



Mort and Reva Schlesinger, by Lisa Getter.  
Courtesy of the Nantucket Cottage Hospital.





## Measuring stick, 1819

Unknown Nantucket maker. Whale panbone, 35<sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 1 x 1/4 in.

Purchase from the Robert M. Waggaman Acquisition Fund, 2011 (2011.17.1)



This whale-bone measuring stick is inscribed to Sarah Coffin with the date 1819, making it one of the earliest dated pieces of Nantucket scrimshaw that has yet come to light. Intended to measure fabric yardage, it is one-yard long and marked by four deep incisions to indicate one-half, one-quarter, one-eighth, and one-sixteenth of a yard. Its stippled decoration combines images of home and the sea, with a horse and rider and tree-shaded house on the left, and a sperm whale, patriotic spread-eagle, and whaleship on the right. The figure of a person next to the ship is linked by a fouled anchor and a heart to a repeat of the shaded house, suggesting the bonds of fidelity and love that might bind a sailor at sea to his family and friends at home.



Pie crimper said to have been made by Obed Sandsbury (1817–1902) of Nantucket on a whaling voyage, 1840–44. Purchase, 1910 (1910.20.1).





Rolling pin of exotic wood with whale-ivory ends, made by whaler David Baker (1811–64) of Nantucket and given to his sister-in-law, Eliza F. (Coffin) Cushman, at her wedding, 1852. Gift of Mrs. W. R. Underwood (1945.12.1).

A great deal of nineteenth-century whalemens' scrimshaw is sentimental and domestic in nature, like this yardstick, reflecting the longing for home that years at sea could inspire. Whalers frequently engraved homey scenes onto sperm-whale teeth, fashioned intimate corset busks, carved fancy pie crimpers, and made quasi-practical items such as ivory-ended rolling pins and bone food choppers as remembrances for family and friends. We do not know exactly who Sarah Coffin was—there were more than two dozen women of that name living on Nantucket in 1819—but we can be reasonably certain some whaleman loved her to have made her a gift such as this.



## *Back of Nichols' Barn, 'Sconset, 1883*

George Inness (1825–94). Oil on board, 18½ x 24½ in.

Gift of the Friends of the Nantucket Historical Association with support from the Max and Heidi Berry Acquisition Fund and the NHA Acquisition Fund, 2011 (2011.6.1)

Landscape painter George Inness (1825–94) visited Nantucket a number of times. He stayed in 1883 with the well-known writer and music educator George Ward Nichols (1831–85) of Cincinnati and his wife Maria (1849–1932) at their summer place in 'Sconset. This painting, one of a few Inness created that summer, presents Nantucket as a land of rustic decline, where sheep loll at their ease in the overgrown brush. The old whale-oil casks on the left, symbols of the island's former industrial energy, have been reduced to mere water bearers for the animals; the plank fence, never fancy to begin with, has been allowed to weather away in the sea air.<sup>155</sup>

The island's picturesque quaintness was a chief selling point in Nantucketers' efforts to recast the island as a summer destination after the Civil War. Inness's visits to the island—and, perhaps more so, George and Maria Nichols's presence at 'Sconset—attest to the emergence of the new summer economy, which, now fully matured, continues to drive the island today.







Photograph by Tony Dumitru.

## Chinese-export pitcher with lid, ca. 1805

Unknown Chinese maker. Glazed and gilded porcelain, 10¾ x 8¾ x 6¾ in.

Purchase, 2012 (2012.20.1)

Barrel-shaped porcelain pitchers or jugs like this one were manufactured in China in large numbers for export to America and Europe. They were typically decorated with stock imagery, such as landscapes, flowers, Chinese court scenes, or Masonic symbols. Here, instead, the pitcher features custom-painted Nantucket vignettes, one showing Edward and Lydia Cary's farm at Squam, complete with cows, dogs, and the shining sun, the other depicting the ropewalk that Edward and his sons operated on the south side of Nantucket town. Edward and Lydia's monogram, "ELC," appears in gilt under the spout, which, atypically, does not have a built-in strainer for use serving cider. The traditional Chinese guardian lion on the lid contrasts strangely with the provincial American scenes.

Captain James Cary (1777–1812) commissioned the pitcher at Canton (now Guangzhou) as a gift for his parents. He commanded the ship *Rose* on a number of trading voyages between Nantucket and China from the time the ship was built at Brant Point in 1802–3 until it was captured by the British during the War of 1812. The log of the ship's first voyage, from 1803 to 1805, describes how Captain Cary took the *Rose*, "laden with sundries," across the Atlantic and Indian oceans to Whampoa (now Pazhou) on the Pearl River. There he traded his cargo for tea and Chinese manufactured goods. Many of the fine items Cary and his officers brought back for their families still survive.<sup>156</sup>



Captain James Cary brought home these glazed-porcelain guardian-lion candlesticks from Canton as a gift for his wife Betsey, whose monogram appears on each. Gift of the Friends of the Nantucket Historical Association, 1992 (1992.45.1 & .2).



## Sailor-made jump rope, ca. 1860

Attributed to George B. Hussey (1831–1901). Hemp, painted canvas, whale ivory, 87 in.  
Gift of Helen Marshall Hall Brown in memory of Florence Farrier Hall, 2012 (2012.27.1)

Young Helen Marshall (1851–1939) received this unique jump rope, with its whale-ivory and knotwork handles, from a sailor aboard the 1856–61 voyage of the whaling bark *Aurora*. Helen's father, Joseph Marshall of Nantucket, commanded the *Aurora*, and she and her mother, Malvina, were making the voyage with him (see page 158).<sup>157</sup>

Helen was born on the island of Faial in the Azores, near the beginning of her father's previous command. She spent eight of her first nine-and-a-half years aboard whalers with her parents. Returning to Nantucket in 1861, she continued her education on island and at Vassar College. She made the Grand Tour of Europe in 1876–77 with her friend Ann (Mitchell) Macy, a sister of astronomer Maria Mitchell. Upon her return, Helen taught at Nantucket High School and later at the Norwich Free Academy in Connecticut. She maintained a cottage at 'Sconset in her retirement.<sup>158</sup>

Family tradition says that the sailor who made the jump rope was the second mate, George B. Hussey (1831–1901), a distant cousin of Helen's. Little is known of his life, although Helen sent an arrangement of ferns and pinks to his funeral in 1901.<sup>159</sup>



Helen Marshall at about age ten, ca. 1861. Quarter-plate ambrotype, 4¼ x 3¼ in. Gift of Marsha Hall Brown in honor of Florence Farrier Hall, 2012 (C281).





Photograph by Tony Dumitru.



## Souvenir spoon, ca. 1910

Gorham Manufacturing Company, Providence, R.I. Sterling silver, 5 $\frac{5}{8}$  in.  
Gift of Carl and Nancy Gewirz, 2012 (2012.31.165)

What tourist destination is without its souvenirs? Nantucket's enterprising shopkeepers have procured mementos to sell to visitors since the beginning of the island's tourist economy in the mid-nineteenth century. Transfer-printed ceramics, etched drinking glasses, printed silk scarves, framed scenic photographs, picture postcards, illustrated books, T-shirts—the historical association collection is well stocked with examples of trinkets bearing images of island landmarks or celebrating the halcyon days of Nantucket whaling.

This clever whaling-themed spoon reflects the island's transformation from an industrial town based on whaling to a vacation town based on the heritage of whaling. It is one of nearly four hundred Nantucket and New England souvenir spoons collected by island seasonal resident Carl Gewirz over many decades and given to the historical association in 2012.

## *Sampson Dyer, 1802*

Spoilum (active ca. 1785–1810). Oil on canvas, 23 x 18 in.

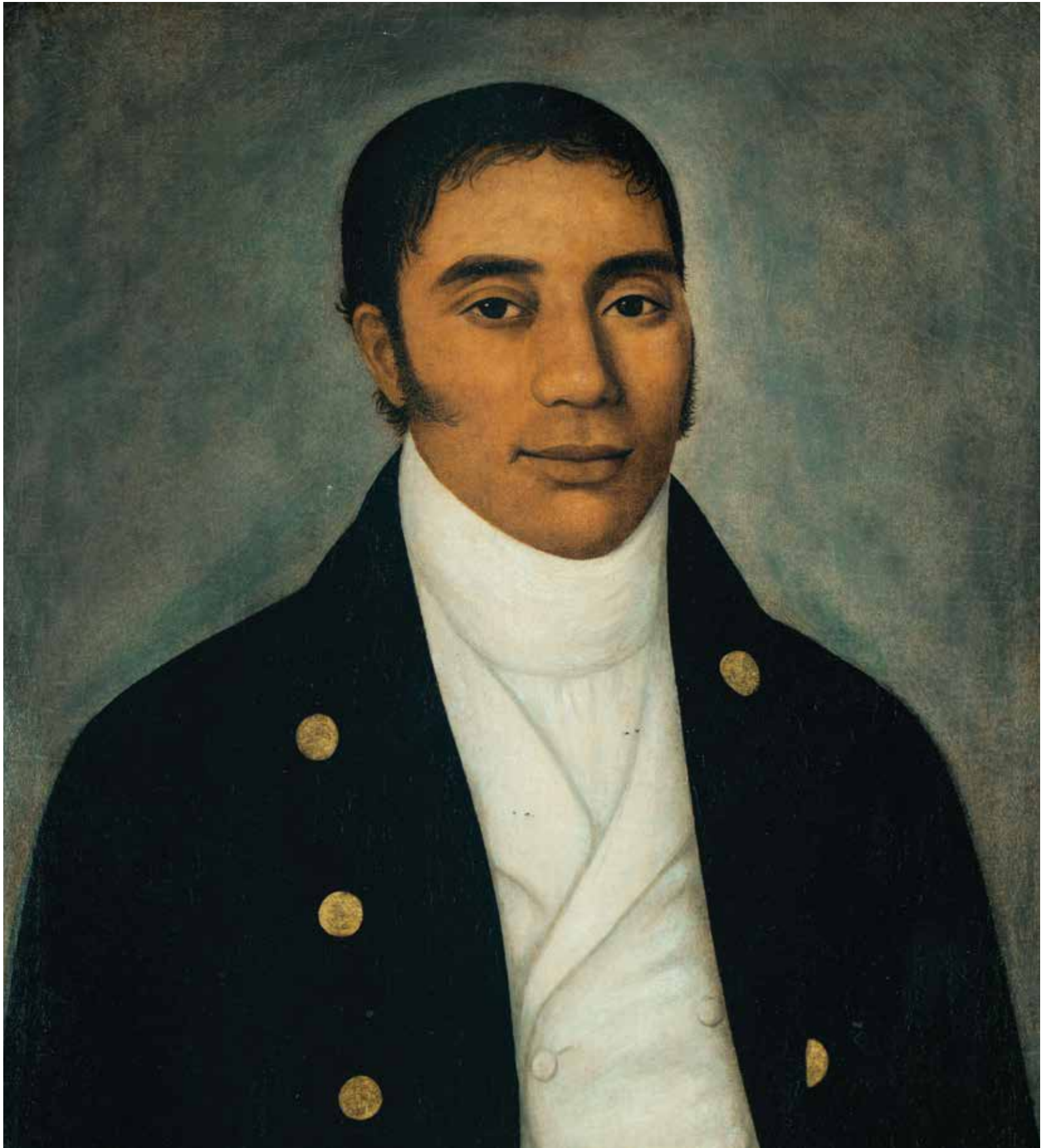
Gift of the Friends of the Nantucket Historical Association, 2013 (2013.2.1)

Sampson Dyer (1773–1843) was born in Newport, Rhode Island, of mixed African and Wampanoag heritage. He and his wife settled on Nantucket in the 1790s in the island’s small but thriving community of free black sailors and tradespeople.<sup>160</sup>

For a brief period after the American Revolution and lasting until the War of 1812, Nantucket shipowners engaged in the China Trade, often gathering seal pelts on the voyage out to trade for porcelain, tea, silks, and other goods at Canton (now Guangzhou). Dyer is believed to have signed aboard the ship *Active* as steward for a trading voyage to China in the 1790s. From 1802 to 1805, he was aboard the *Lady Adams* of Nantucket on a voyage that hunted seals in the Juan Fernandez Islands off Chile before continuing to Canton (see page 9). It is on one of these voyages that Dyer

commissioned his portrait from the Chinese painter Spoilum, an artist who specialized in European-style paintings in oil of sea captains and both Chinese and Western merchants.<sup>161</sup>

Dyer made a voyage to South Africa in 1806, returning to Nantucket in 1810 to discover his wife had been unfaithful. Abandoning her to return to South Africa, he started a new life, receiving British citizenship in 1812 and remarrying in 1813. Sealing, trading, and land-owning brought him wealth and respect. “Samson Dyer is a most extraordinary man of uncommon industry, honesty, and sobriety,” a leading Capetonian wrote of him. Dyer died in Cape Town in 1843, and Dyer Island near the Cape of Good Hope is named in his honor.<sup>162</sup>







## Hull fragment from the ship *Joseph Starbuck*, 1842

Unknown Nantucket shipwright. Oak, copper, 11 x 14½ x 2½ in.

Gift of Margaret Van Deusen, 2015 (2015.9.1)

The ship *Joseph Starbuck*, built at Brant Point for the eponymous merchant's sons, made one outstandingly successful whaling voyage to the Pacific between 1838 and 1842. In November 1842, Captain Charles A. Veeder prepared the ship for a second voyage. Because a sandbar hindered the passage of deeply laden vessels in and out of the harbor, the *Joseph Starbuck* was towed light to Edgartown on Martha's Vineyard to complete provisioning. With the entire crew and invited female guests aboard, the *Joseph Starbuck* was led out by the steamer *Telegraph* at 7:00 a.m. on Sunday the twenty-seventh. Powerful headwinds soon developed, forcing the *Telegraph* to return to port and the *Joseph Starbuck* to anchor about four miles out. The *Nantucket Inquirer* describes what happened next:

*In the afternoon the wind had increased to a gale, the ship rode violently, having of course but little ballast on board, one chain cable after another parted, and she drove*

*furiously from her moorings in an easterly direction. To preserve her from passing out to sea . . . the mizzen-mast was cut away, the foresail set, and every effort made to return into port. . . . [T]he attempt failed; the ship drifted towards the eastern extremity of the bar, until midnight, when she struck bottom, and consequently rolled over upon her broadside, in a trough of the sea, the waves breaking frightfully over her . . . .*<sup>163</sup>

The steamer *Massachusetts* managed to approach the wreck in the morning and, through strenuous effort in the dangerous seas, rescue all thirty-five people aboard. Abandoned, the *Joseph Starbuck* pounded to pieces where it lay, worthless fragments washing up on the island's beaches. This evocative piece, complete with copper fasteners, was preserved by the descendants of whaler William Hussey Macy in their 'Sconset attic.

## Half-model of the *Charlotte Brown*, 1863

Unknown Essex, Mass., shipwright. Wood, 8 x 48 x 7 in.

Gift of Robert and Nina Hellman, 2016 (2016.28.1)

This is the original builder's half-model of the eighty-two-foot, eighty-three-ton fishing schooner *Charlotte Brown*, which was constructed at Essex, Massachusetts, in 1863. The *Charlotte Brown* fished for mackerel out of Nantucket from 1866 through 1870 as part of the fleet of the short-lived Nantucket Fishing Company.<sup>164</sup>

The Nantucket Fishing Company was one of a number of commercial undertakings tried in the 1850s and 1860s to fill the economic vacuum created by the decline of whaling. In fall 1864, the *Nantucket Weekly Mirror* reported that a Captain Eldridge from Harwich on Cape Cod had approached "a number of our enterprising men" to invest in the creation of a deep-sea mackerel-fishing fleet out of Nantucket. "We sincerely trust that our townsmen will not let this opportunity slip by, without an attempt to give the business a test. . . . We are surrounded by water, teeming with an

immense sea-stock . . . rich in measureless harvests, only waiting for us to gather them into the garner of industry and persevering labor. Shall others reap, while we sleep?"<sup>165</sup>

The new fishing company leased Commercial Wharf and a pair of underused whale-oil warehouses for a term of five years and purchased five second-hand schooners from the Gloucester fishing fleet. Success during the 1865 season led the company to acquire three more vessels in early 1866, including the *Charlotte Brown*, which was purchased from A. Cressey of Gloucester for \$11,750. The company added a ninth vessel to the fleet in early 1867.<sup>166</sup>

Unprofitable seasons followed, and the company was dissolved in early 1871. The *Charlotte Brown* was sold at auction for \$5,000 and fished out of ports on Cape Cod until 1889. The vessel sank carrying a cargo of cement from New York to Mobile, Alabama, in May 1889; all aboard survived.<sup>167</sup>







Nantucket fishermen with their dories and equipment on the beach at 'Sconset, 1870s, by Kilburn Brothers, Littleton, N.H. (SG6478).





## *Ship George Clinton of Hudson, 1835*

Unknown artist. Ink on whale ivory, 3½ x 9½ x 1½ in.

Gift of the Friends of the Nantucket Historical Association, 2017 (2017.6.1)

Nantucket's economy ground to a halt during the American Revolution, creating hardships that convinced many islanders to leave for opportunities elsewhere. Among those who left were eighteen families who purchased land together one hundred miles upriver from New York City, far from the threat of foreign privateers. Their town, Hudson, thrived as a new whaling port into the 1830s and later developed as a manufacturing center.<sup>168</sup>

Captain Samuel Barrett (1793–1871) of Nantucket commanded the Hudson-based ship *George Clinton* on a whaling voyage to the Pacific Ocean from 1834 to 1838. In September 1835, the ship encountered a shoal of sperm whales near remote

Enderbury Island. In the typically telegraphic style of nineteenth-century ship's logbooks, Captain Barrett wrote:

*at 3 PM saw [whales] put off[f] struck 4 got three at 6 PM  
got them along Side Lattr cut them in at 9 made sail to SE  
at 11 began to boil.*<sup>169</sup>

Homeward bound in January 1838, the *George Clinton* ran ashore in thick fog at Little Egg Harbor on the New Jersey coast. The entire crew survived—one of them carrying this scrimshawed tooth with him—and 1,459 barrels of sperm oil were salvaged.<sup>170</sup>



## Clipper ship *Midnight*, 1860s

Hin Qua (active ca. 1850–80). Oil on canvas, 21¼ x 31¼ in.

Gift of the Friends of the Nantucket Historical Association, 2017 (2017.9.1)

Captain George H. Brock (1826–1908) of Nantucket commanded the clipper ship *Midnight* from 1858 to 1864 and again from 1866 to 1872. He made numerous passages from Boston and New York around Cape Horn to San Francisco, as well as voyages to Honolulu, Hong Kong, Rangoon, Yokohama, Melbourne, and other ports, carrying trade goods of all descriptions and, on at least one occasion, 356 immigrant workers from China to San Francisco.<sup>171</sup>

Captain Brock's wife, Charlotte (1828–1912), and daughter, Susan (1852–1937), sailed with him at least once, in 1858. One stormy day, he bundled Susan up warmly and brought her on deck. "Between driving snow squalls," she remembered, "[he] told me which way to look to see a point of land covered with snow and ice, saying, with much emphasis, 'Now look

hard and try to remember what you see, for there are not many little girls who ever see Cape Horn.'"<sup>172</sup> Susan Brock later became the first curator of the Nantucket Historical Association. Serving for thirty-four years, she gave many Brock family heirlooms to the collection, including Chinese porcelains and textiles carried on the *Midnight* and a quilt square she herself stitched during her Cape Horn passage.

The 962-ton *Midnight* was built by Fernald & Pettigrew at Portsmouth, New Hampshire, in 1854 for Henry Hastings of Boston. Chinese artist Hin Qua painted the ship's portrait on one of its visits to Hong Kong. The ship is identified by a nameboard on the starboard quarter and the Henry Hastings house flag at the masthead. The artist has changed the real ship's gilded lion figurehead to an eagle.<sup>173</sup>



Susan Brock at age six prior to sailing with her parents on the ship *Midnight*, 1858, from *Doubling Cape Horn* by Susan E. Brock, 1926.



Captain George H. Brock, 1868 or 1869, by Silas Selleck, San Francisco (CDV1017).





NANTUCKET ISLAND, MASSACHUSETTS  
(30 MILES AT SEA)



SEA CLIFF INN

Left

Dear Mamma;

I got Blakie's  
all O.K. and you can tell  
I'll answer it in the n

Will not be home  
the twentieth after all I  
as the hotel is not to close  
before the 19th.

Things are getting pretty des  
The no. of guests has shrunk  
265 to about 89 and lots  
help has gone home. My  
went home Monday morning



Luncheon.

Chicken Gumbo a la Creole  
Hot or Cold Consomme en Tasse  
Dill Pickles Chow Chow

Fried Filet of Sole, Tartar Sauce  
Lattice Potatoes

Lamb Stew with Vegetables  
Fried Corn Meal Mush, Maple Syrup

Roast Loin of Pork, Apple Sauce

Baked Potatoes German Fried Potatoes  
Creamed Carrots Stringless Beans

COLD

Roast Beef Ham Lamb Ox Tongue  
Pickled Lambs' Tongues Pigs' Feet

Beet and Egg Salad, Mayonnaise

Queen Pudding, Cherry Sauce  
Chocolate Cream Pie Apple Pie  
Wine Jelly, Whipped Cream  
Cinnamon Rolls

Orange Water Ice Assorted Cakes  
Pineapple Preserve Grapefruit Marmalade  
American and Cream Cheese  
Saltines Butter Thins

Tea Coffee Cocoa Milk

Saturday, June 30, 1917.





## Letters home, 1917

F. Chester Adams (1898–1979). Ink on paper, various sizes  
Gift of Carl Anderson, 2017 (Ms. 545)

In 1917, nineteen-year-old F. Chester Adams (1898–1979) of Pittsfield, New Hampshire, took a three-month summer job as a bellhop at Nantucket's Sea Cliff Inn. He wrote regularly to his mother, sending descriptions of his work, impressions of the island, photographs of his friends, and requests for personal items he found he needed. (He also sent her his laundry to wash and return.) "This is some shack," he wrote the first week:

*The Inn has . . . a barber, 3 engineers, laundry man and three helpers, 5 chefs, a pieman and a baker, a night watchman besides all the waiters, stewarts [sic], chambermaids, clerks, telephone operators, etc. It has a refrigerating plant which makes pure ice and keeps a stable of 27 horses. It has three beautiful Jersey cows and they're corks, believe me!*<sup>174</sup>

The season started off slowly, and Adams made little money, but by August the hotel was full and he was making \$4 on good days and sending money home. He told his mother

that the island fog made his room and clothes damp in the mornings. He had to meet passengers arriving off the boat, which was often late. He sent a snapshot of himself and a girl visiting the Old Mill. The island's lack of automobiles particularly struck young motor-mad Adams. "I go down to the tailor shop and smell of the gasoline they use to clean garments with, when I get hard up for motoring," he admitted.<sup>175</sup>

The United States had entered World War I by this point, and Adams noted the submarine chasers at the wharves and the sailors in town. He also mentioned the draft "striking" men working at the hotel. His final surviving letter, written a week before the hotel closed for the season, informed his parents of his plans to enlist in the army. "The Motor Transport Division is the place I ought to be in and want to be in," he declared. In the end, he served in Europe from September 1918 through January 1919 in the First Gas Regiment, part of the Army Chemical Warfare Service.<sup>176</sup>

## CPO jacket, late 1970s

Nantucket Looms, retailer and fabric manufacturer; Lia Marks (b. 1925), designer and seamstress. Wool, cotton, ivory  
Gift of Patricia S. Anathan, 2017 (2017.11.1)

First produced in the late 1960s, this CPO jacket is one of the most recognizable and best-selling designs made by the Nantucket Looms. Especially popular with the summer crowd, the jackets were made to order for both men and women using tweeds woven by the Looms. They featured printed linings from Liberty of London and ivory buttons as a luxurious finishing touch. At the height of the style's popularity, there was a three- to four-month-long wait list to get one. This example was worn by long-time summer resident Robert P. Anathan (1915–83).

Efforts to revitalize Nantucket in the 1960s included the restoration of the Jared Coffin House by the Nantucket Historical Trust from 1961 to 1963. The decoration of this hotel, directed by Mary Ann Beinecke (1927–2014), included extensive weaving of reproduction textiles, carried out by local craftspeople trained and led by Andy Oates (1926–2012), a graduate of the Rhode Island School of Design and student of famed modernist weaver Anni Albers.<sup>177</sup>

Andy's weavers became the Nantucket Looms. With a shop on Main Street and representation in New York City, the Looms earned a reputation for high-quality interior fabrics, custom rugs, and tweeds for sportswear woven using all-natural materials. Under the management of Bill Euler (1931–99), Andy's partner in both life and business, the company began producing clothing using its fabrics, starting with neckties and diversifying into shirts, jackets, and more. The company first hired Lia Marks (b. 1925), a skilled German-born seamstress who lived on island, to hand-stitch the ties. When Bill realized that she could produce almost anything, she became the Looms's designated designer and seamstress, creating the majority of the company's clothing for over five decades, including this iconic jacket.<sup>178</sup>

JN









## Quarterboard from "The Struggle," 1964

Ronald Santos (b. 1947). Painted wood, 4½ x 44½ x 1 in.

Gift of Ronald Santos, 2017 (2017.15.1)

"The Struggle" is what Bernice Santos (b. 1922) called her father's effort to build a house for her on Surfside Road in 1964. First a storm washed out the foundation; then another storm damaged the walls. Delays piled up, "one thing right after another." When the modest ranch-style house was finished, Bernice's son Ronald, who helped build it, carved his mother a quarterboard to hang on the facade, commemorating their efforts.<sup>179</sup>

Bernice Santos's house was part of a wave of suburban development that began on Nantucket in the 1960s and accelerated through the 1970s and 1980s. Her parents, Dennis and Alexandria Dias (1896–1978, 1901–78)—immigrants from the Azores who met and married in New Bedford in 1918—owned a substantial tract of mid-island land, which they subdivided in part during the 1960s to provide building lots for their children and which their children subdivided further in the early 1980s for general residential development.<sup>180</sup>

Major changes in town created demand for suburban house lots. Beginning in the 1960s, business interests led by

Walter Beinecke Jr. (1918–2004) redeveloped Nantucket's waterfront and reshaped its downtown retail landscape to make the island more exclusive and more attractive to wealthy summer visitors. Many year-round families responded by cashing out their town properties and moving to new homes in the center of the island.<sup>181</sup>

Today, more than seventy-six percent of the island's homes have been built since 1960. Despite this residential growth, housing opportunities for the increasing year-round working population have diminished. The high demand for seasonal homes and the wild success of land-conservation efforts, which have protected about sixty percent of the island from development, have limited the number of houses available and inflated prices beyond ordinary reach. This hyper-competitive market compounds the enduring challenges of living on a remote and wind-swept island, giving poignant new meaning to the idea of naming a Nantucket house "The Struggle."<sup>182</sup>

# Notes

1. [Mary E. Starbuck], letter to editor, *Inquirer and Mirror*, May 19, 1894, 4.
2. *Inquirer and Mirror*, May 26, 1894, 4.
3. *Proceedings of the Nantucket Historical Association* [hereafter cited as *Proceedings*], June 17, 1895, 9; *Proceedings*, July 23, 1896, 22.
4. *Proceedings*, July 18, 1906, 14.
5. *Proceedings*, July 18, 1905, 16.
6. "Statement regarding proposed Whaling Museum," *Inquirer and Mirror*, Sept. 4, 1926, 1; "Nantucket Whaling Museum," *Inquirer and Mirror*, July 30, 1927, 5.
7. NHA council-meeting minute book no. 1, NHA institutional records, 8, 14.
8. [Mary E. Starbuck], letter to editor, *Inquirer and Mirror*, May 19, 1894, 4; quote from Nantucket Historical Association [hereafter NHA] accession ledger entries for 1895.1.1, LC 8, and 1928.54.1.
9. Robert A. diCurcio, *Art on Nantucket* (Nantucket: NHA, 1982), 10; Michael A. Jehle, ed., *Picturing Nantucket* (Nantucket: NHA, 2000), 78–80.
10. Logbooks of the *Lady Adams*, Aug. 24, 1802–Mar. 26, 1803, Aug. 27, 1802–Aug. 9, 1803, and Mar. 10, 1804–Apr. 11, 1805, Ships' Logs Collection, NHA Ms. 220, reel 165; Michael A. Jehle, *From Brant Point to the Boca Tigris: Nantucket and the China Trade* (Nantucket: NHA, 1994), 62–68.
11. "The Lady Adams," *Nantucket Inquirer*, Mar. 3, 1827, 2.
12. Two misleading inscriptions appear on the front and back of the shingle. The front reads, "Blown from the Thos. Coffin Hs., corner of Milk and Vestal Sts., September [illegible]." The back, apparently copied from the front, reads, "Blown from the Thomas Coffin house, corner of Milk and Vestal Sts., September 13th, 1904. A tornado. This shingle is 16 inches long, 6 inches wide. Had been in the building over 60 years." Collections records clearly indicate the shingle was collected in 1895, not in 1904, although there was a windstorm on Nantucket on the date claimed. The dimensions inscribed on the artifact are also incorrect.
13. Edmund Ruffin, "Observations Made During an Excursion to the Dismal Swamp," *Farmers' Register* 4, no. 9 (Jan. 1, 1837): 513–21; Porte Crayon [David H. Strother], "The Dismal Swamp," *Harper's New Magazine* 13 (Sept. 1856): 441–55; Frederick Law Olmsted, *A Journey in the Seaboard Slave States with Remarks on Their Economy* (New York: Dix and Edwards, 1856), 149–63; Peter C. Stewart, "The Shingle and Lumber Industries in the Great Dismal," *Journal of Forest History* 25, no. 2 (Apr. 1981): 98–107.
14. H. Roy Merrens, *Colonial North Carolina in the Eighteenth Century* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1964); Jack Temple Kirby, *Poquosin: A Study of a Rural Landscape and Society* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995); Daniel O. Sayers, et al., "The Political Economy of Exile in the Great Dismal Swamp," *International Journal of Historical Archaeology* 11, no. 1 (Mar. 2007): 60–97.
15. "Report of the Fire Department," 1846, Great Nantucket Fire Collection, NHA Ms. 37, folder 5; "Awful calamity. One third of our town in ruins," *Warder*, July 15, 1846, 1.
16. John Wallace Hutchinson, *Story of the Hutchinsons* (Boston: Lee and Shepard, 1896), 1:xv.
17. Scott Gac, *Singing for Freedom: The Hutchinson Family Singers and the Nineteenth-Century Culture of Reform* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007).
18. "Aeolian Concert," *Nantucket Inquirer*, June 24, 1843, 2.
19. "Obituary," *Nantucket Journal*, Oct. 25, 1888, 2; Frances Ruley Karttunen, *The Other Islanders: People Who Pulled Nantucket's Oars* (New Bedford: Spinner Publications, 2005), 76–77.
20. "Kidnapping in Nantucket," *Nantucket Inquirer*, Oct. 29, 1822, 2; "The Quakers and slavery," *Inquirer and Mirror*, Mar. 16, 1878, 3; "Arthur Cooper again" *Inquirer and Mirror*, June 15, 1878, 2; Karttunen, *Other Islanders*, 76.
21. William Summerhays introduced tintype photography to Nantucket in summer 1857. He used the melainotype process, which he called the *melleneotype*. "Notice," *Nantucket Inquirer*, July 20, 1857, 3.
22. "Steamer Island Home," *Nantucket Weekly Mirror*, Sept. 8, 1855, 2; Harry B. Turner, *The Story of the Island Steamers* (Nantucket: Inquirer and Mirror Press, 1910), 43–49; Paul C. Morris and Joseph F. Morin, *The Island Steamers* (Nantucket: Nantucket Nautical Publishers, 1977), 11, 13, 17.
23. "The Island Home," *Nantucket Journal*, Sept. 26, 1895, 1; Morris, *Island Steamers*, 38.
24. "Special notice," *Nantucket Inquirer*, Mar. 11, 1826, 3.
25. *Proceedings*, July 25, 1898, 3; *Proceedings*, July 19, 1900, 4.
26. Betsy Tyler, *Nantucket Historical Association Historic Properties Guide* (Nantucket: NHA, 2015), 17–26.
27. Clay Lancaster, *Holiday Island* (Nantucket: NHA, 1993), 52–54, 88–90, 101.
28. Lancaster, *Holiday Island*, 91, 95–96; "Electric light," *Inquirer and Mirror*, Aug. 24, 1889, 2.
29. *Nantucket Inquirer*, Apr. 12, 1845, 3; *Nantucket Inquirer*, July 26, 1845, 3; Grant B. Romer and Brian Wallis, eds., *Young America: The Daguerreotypes of Southworth & Hawes* (New York: International Center of Photography, 2005).
30. Karttunen, *Other Islanders*, 55–56.
31. Dassel's given name is often spelled *Herminia* in modern sources, but all period sources agree it was *Hermine*. Her maiden name appears as *Borchardt* in German period sources but as *Borchard* in American ones. The original German spellings have been preferred here.
32. "Mannichfaltigkeiten," *Didaskalia* 95 (Apr. 20, 1852): n.p.
33. "Mrs. Dassel," *Inquirer and Mirror*, Dec. 15, 1857, 2; "The late Mrs. Dassel," *New York Times*, Dec. 17, 1857, 8; "Mrs. Hermine Dassel," *Crayon* (Jan. 1858): 26; "Hermine Borchardt," *Allgemeine Zeitung* (Munich), July 30, 1858, 3426.
34. Charles H. Carpenter Jr. and Mary Grace Carpenter, *The Decorative Arts and Crafts of Nantucket* (New York: Dodd, Mead & Co., 1987), 185–93.
35. "Obituary," *Inquirer and Mirror*, June 17, 1899, 4; "Captain James Wyer," Nantucket Lightship Basket Museum, <https://www.nantucketlightshipbasketmuseum.org>.
36. Patricia Hills, "Eastman Johnson on Nantucket," in Jehle, *Picturing Nantucket*, 35–47.
37. "Fruit culture," *Nantucket Weekly Mirror*, Oct. 4, 1856, 2; "Letter from Nantucket," *Island Review*, Sept. 29, 1877, 4; "A Nantucket pauper," *Nantucket Journal*, Mar. 26, 1879, 3; "A sailor of the olden time," *Inquirer and Mirror*, Feb. 25, 1882, 2; "Robert Ratliff, master rigger of Nantucket," *Inquirer and Mirror*, Sept. 12, 1925, 3; Jehle, *Picturing Nantucket*, 131–33.
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39. "Pictorial wood carving, James W. Folger's new art," *Inquirer and Mirror*, Apr. 23, 1904, 2; "Nantucket's pictorial wood carver," *Boston Daily Globe*, Oct. 2, 1910, 44.
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41. Booker, *Nantucket Spirit*, 64–66.
42. *Proceedings*, July 21, 1904, 13; *Inquirer and Mirror*, May 7, 1904, 4.
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44. *Proceedings*, July 21, 1904, 12; Aberthaw Construction Company, *Aberthaw: A Quarter Century of Fulfillment, 1894–1919* (Boston: Aberthaw Construction Company, 1919), 12; W. N. Hazen, "The Effects of the Baltimore Fire," *Proceedings of the Engineers' Society of Western Pennsylvania* 20, [no. 4] (April 1904): 208–37.
45. The Fair Street Museum is sometimes inaccurately described as the second reinforced-concrete or concrete-frame building in Massachusetts, after Harvard Stadium. The United Shoe Machine Company in Beverly predates the museum by a year, and other prior buildings likely remain unidentified.
46. Daniel Vickers, "Nantucket Whalemens in the Deep-Sea Fishery: The Changing Anatomy of an Early American Labor Force," *Journal of American History* 72, no. 2 (Sept. 1985): 281.



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48. "Nantucket Historical Association announces recent donations," *Inquirer and Mirror*, Sept. 29, 1961, 4; "Brockton man is kin to 'wife' in Snow book," *Inquirer and Mirror*, Dec. 28, 1962, 2.
49. P. T. Barnum, letter to Captain William Cash, Aug. 1866, Cash Family Papers, NHA Ms. 228.
50. George W. Jones, letter to William Tripp, Mar. 22, 1957, NHA institutional records, box 40, folder 496.
51. "Ancient relic," *Island Review*, Nov. 6, 1876, 2.
52. *Lloyd's List*, Feb. 12, 1813, 4745; *Sketches of the War between the United States and the British Isles* (Rutland, Vt.: Fay and Davison, 1815), 148; Charles Henry Davis, "A Memoir upon the Geological Action of the tidal and other Currents of the Ocean," *Memoirs of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences* 4, part 1 (Cambridge, Mass.: Metcalf and Co., 1849), 139; Arthur H. Gardner, *A List of Wrecks Around Nantucket* (Nantucket: printed by the author, 1877), 13–14.
53. Robert Hellman, "The Nantucket Camels," *Historic Nantucket* 65, no. 1 (Spring 2015), 4–9.
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55. "Paul Mitchell," *Inquirer and Mirror*, Jan. 17, 1877, 2; John James Currier, *History of Newburyport, Massachusetts, 1764–1905* (Newburyport, Mass.: published by the author, 1909), 350–51.
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57. *Proceedings*, July 18, 1906, 13–14.
58. Jehle, *Picturing Nantucket*, 156–57; Karttunen, *Other Islanders*, 68–70; *Inquirer and Mirror*, Dec. 12, 1857, 2.
59. The table's history is recorded in a note written inside one of the drawers by Eliza W. Mitchell.
60. "For sale," *Islander*, Aug. 13, 1842, 3; "Nantucket Agricultural Fair," *Nantucket Weekly Mirror*, Nov. 1, 1856, 2; "Manufactured articles," *Nantucket Weekly Mirror*, Oct. 12, 1861, 2.
61. Four letters concerning the Atlantic Silk Company, 1836, Samuel Haynes Jenks Papers, NHA Ms. 133, folder 3; Silk industry documents, Nantucket Businesses and Industries Collection, NHA Ms. 149, folder 16.
62. "Exhibition of silk goods," *Nantucket Inquirer*, Dec. 17, 1836, 2.
63. "Silk manufacture," *Silk Culturist and Farmer's Manual* (Dec. 1836): 167.
64. Ibid.; "Nantucket silk goods," *Nantucket Inquirer*, Dec. 14, 1836, 2.
65. [Frederick C. Sanford], "Another schoolmate gone," *Inquirer and Mirror*, Apr. 20, 1878, 2; Seelye A. Willson, "Nantucket and the Whale-Fishers," *Magazine of Western History* 9, no. 5 (Mar. 1889): 541–42; Jehle, *Picturing Nantucket*, 119–23.
66. Robert McNab, ed., *Historical Records of New Zealand* (Wellington: John MacKay, Government Printer, 1914), 2:604ff.
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71. Ibid., 1–2. The other *Susan's* teeth in the NHA collection are 1991.101.176, dated February 6, 1829, a bequest of Winthrop Williams in 1974, and 2017.23.2, dated February 7, 1829, a gift of Sara Jo Kobacker in 2017.
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73. Robert C. Stanley, *Narrow Gauge: The Story of the Boston, Revere Beach & Lynn Railroad* (Boston: Boston Street Railway Association, 1980), 111–112; "Here and there," *Inquirer and Mirror*, June 29, 1901, 4; "Here and there," *Inquirer and Mirror*, July 6, 1901, 4.
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75. "Want to save *Dionis'* bell," *Inquirer and Mirror*, Apr. 13, 1918, 4; "Nantucket railroad collection on exhibit at Foulger Museum," *Inquirer and Mirror*, Nov. 18, 1976, 14.
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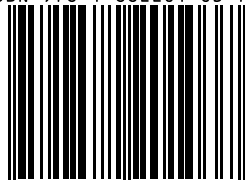
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